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## On the cover



Mohair pullover, £1,100, Chanel (www.chanel.com). Tulle skirt, £5,655, Valentino (www.valentino.com) Photographed by Sarah Maingot Hair and Make-up, Ruth Warrior using Chanel Collection Les Automnales 2015 Model, Magdalena at Premier Model Management Shot at Soho Farmhouse



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## EDITOR'S LETTER



S FESTIVAL SEASON DRAWS TO A CLOSE I feel I'm ready to talk about Glastonbury. Every year Marcus and I used to go to Glastonbury. But one year, I had a rather disastrous return to civilisation. Following on from a sensational few days of swilling about in pear cider, kissing Wayne Rooney and doing tumble-turns in someone's Winnebago, I came back slap bang into parents' evening. I sat there with one hand over my eye. 'Yes, Mr Armitage,' I said, quietly, fixating on his lapel. Straight after parents' evening was my middle daughter's seventh birthday party. Animal

Man came. Animal Man brought a variety of creatures including a skunk, a meerkat, a pancake turtle (looks as it sounds) and a chinchilla. There was an embarrassing moment when I refused to give back the chinchilla. It was so soft and cuddly, like a hot-water bottle covered in the underarm hair of a freshly born cloud. All the children were looking at me, the backs of their hands crawling with tarantulas and twisting yellow snakes. 'Take their animals back first!' I slightly sort of shouted. Anyway, it had been a long day, and looking forward to sleeping the sleep of the dead, I dragged myself upstairs to find my husband snoring as if he had opened the gates of Hades and released all its wild, underworld demons.

It was impossible to sleep so I shoved in a pair of silicone earplugs. The louder and louder he snored, the further and further I pushed the earplugs in. The next morning I woke up and realised that one was stuck. I panicked. I picked at it with a pair of tweezers, a safety pin, a needle. In it went to a depth no one could possibly have anticipated. I rushed to A&E, where a nurse, for whatever reason, poured in a great vat of oil. By the afternoon the wound was suppurating and, with my inner ear disturbed, I was beginning to feel very odd. 'You are starting to list,' said someone in my office.

That night, lying on a bed in the emergency room, gripping my husband's arm, I ended up in surgery to have the thing removed. When it was out, I couldn't have been more relieved had I just given birth. I hugged the doctor, I hugged my husband. We were back on track.

So, no more Glastonbury for me. This year I sent my husband happily on his way, knowing that all would be fine my end of proceedings. The girls and I had a very civilised weekend: a gallery, a food market, ice creams, a film. Marcus returned on the Sunday. He was obviously fatigued but in good shape.

After putting the girls to bed, I pottered up to my bedroom. Marcus was there. He was asleep. The snoring had hit an almost otherworldy crescendo. I grabbed my earplugs. I stuffed them in. The next morning I woke up, aware, again, that something was wrong. I tried not to panic. I called the surgeon, and made an appointment. 'Not just one stuck this time,' he said, kindly, 'but two: one in each ear, no less.'

This is the new issue of *Condé Nast Traveller*. For those who know they'll be seeing Dr Hamad exactly the same time next year, whether they actually blooming go to Glastonbury or not.

## Melinda Stevens Editor





All information and travel details are correct at the time of going to press and may no longer be so on the date of publication. Unless otherwise stated, hotel prices are low-season rates and restaurant prices are for a three-course meal for two without drinks



## CONTRIBUTORS

This month we asked our writers and photographers to tell us about a recent foodie discovery





Steve McCurry Photographer, Tibet (p126)
'One of the most amazing restaurants I've been to in a long time is La Taverna in Perugia, a couple of hours from Rome. There are so many great wines in that part of Umbria and the landscape is breathtaking. I've been to Italy dozens of times but this was one of the best places.' Steve has won many top photography awards, including the Robert Capa Gold Medal





Sharyn Cairns Photographer, Mornington Peninsula (p134) 'The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market in San Francisco takes place three days a week and is full of people lining up for smoked-beef rolls and homemade treats. My highlight is the fish tacos: fresh tuna with cabbage, zesty mayo and sesame seeds on top.' Sharyn is collaborating on an interiors book which is due out early next year





Olivia Falcon *Writer, Health (p97)*'This summer I revisited one of my favourite trattorias,
La Tagliata. It's in the hills above Positano and has the best views. There's no menu, just what mamma has in her kitchen: a never-ending procession of salamis, pastas, grilled meats and wine.' Olivia is a freelance beauty journalist and consultant





Geordie Greig Writer, Tamil Nadu (p146)
'My twins Monica and Octavia have just brought plum wine
in a jar back from Shanghai. On ice, it is dangerously addictive
for anyone with a sweet tooth. They also brought back dried
seaweed. I'm sticking to the plum wine.' Geordie's book Breakfast
With Lucian' has been picked up for a film by Harvey Weinstein





Oivind Haug Photographer, Malmö (p60)
T just love going to Elma's Kafé in the mountain village of Hemsedal in Norway. Everything is made from local produce and the cakes are fantastic. Like all good coffee shops, they make me feel like a regular, not just someone passing through. Try the waffles with brown goat's cheese.' Oivind has travelled the world taking pictures for more than 25 years





Nina Caplan *Writer, Mornington Peninsula (p134)*'My current obsession is Malaysian food, which is an incredible mix of influences from the many cultures who arrived on the tropical peninsula to trade or conquer. For some of the tastiest crab in existence, go to **Medan Portugis**, a cluster of fish stalls in Malacca run by the descendants of Portuguese settlers.' *Nina is an award-winning wine, food and travel journalist* 



She's a fan.



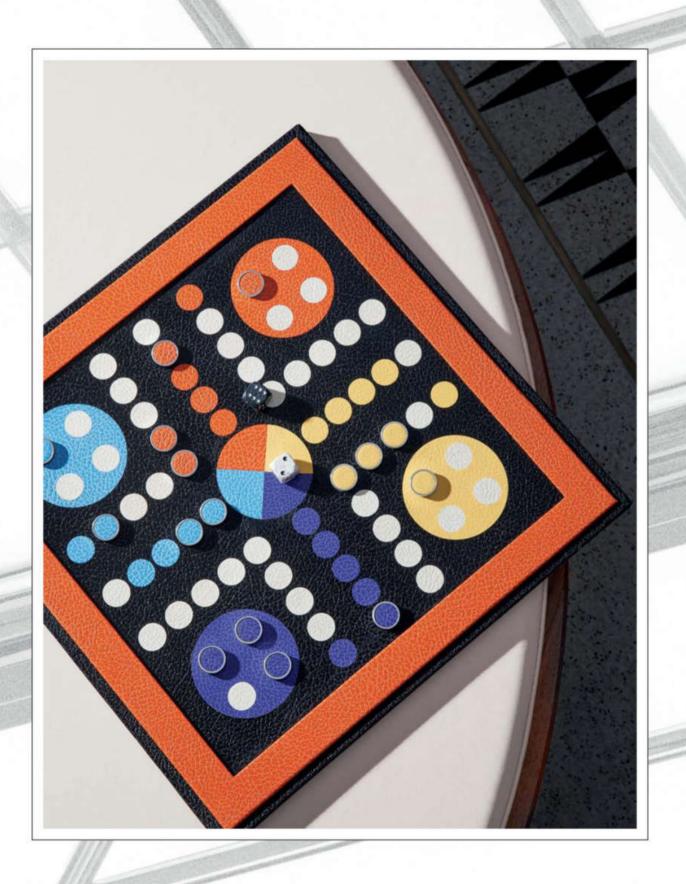
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# WORD OF MOUTH

What's new in Paris Sri Lanka Miami Co Kerry Barcelona Maine

EDITED BY FIONA KERR

# LITTLE VOICE

Her single 'Baby Love' was the sleeper hit of the summer and now French singer Petite Meller has got lots more big ideas

o misquote Sam Cooke, pop stars don't know much about philosophy. Safe to say Rita Ora has probably never been troubled by the existential fallacy of Bertrand Russell. But the subject has an unlikely champion in the coquettish form of Paris-born Petite Meller. The knickerbocker-glory chanteuse (all raspberry cheeks, ice-cream skin and vintage halternecks) writes her 'nuovo jazzy-pop' songs during seminars while studying for her masters. Her videos are certainly thought-provoking. The one for 'Baby Love' was shot around Nairobi's Giraffe Manor, partly inspired by And God Created Woman and starring local flamingos and schoolchildren. 'The philosophers I love are Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Lacan,' she says. 'Lacan's idea of "jouissance" - making pleasure out of pain - is something I use in my songs. From Deleuze I take the desire to become an animal. But my favourite concept is one of Slavoj Zižek's, about "loving your symptom", which means taking any childhood weirdness and turning it into a positive force.'

## PETITE'S PARIS

**Le Comptoir General** 'An amazing club with live shows every night and African food and cocktails – once a week they show old Eddie Murphy movies.'

**Derrière** 'This restaurant may be in the Marais but the decor's very country house, and it has a lovely terrace.'

**Porte de Vanves** 'The best market for Victorian dresses, rare philosophy books and fine hats.'

Chez Sara 'I bought the Forties bathing suits and 19th-century bonnets for the "Backback" and "Baby Love" videos from this vintage store in the Porte de Clignancourt market.'

RICK JORDAN

Petite's new single, 'Barbaric', is out 2 October

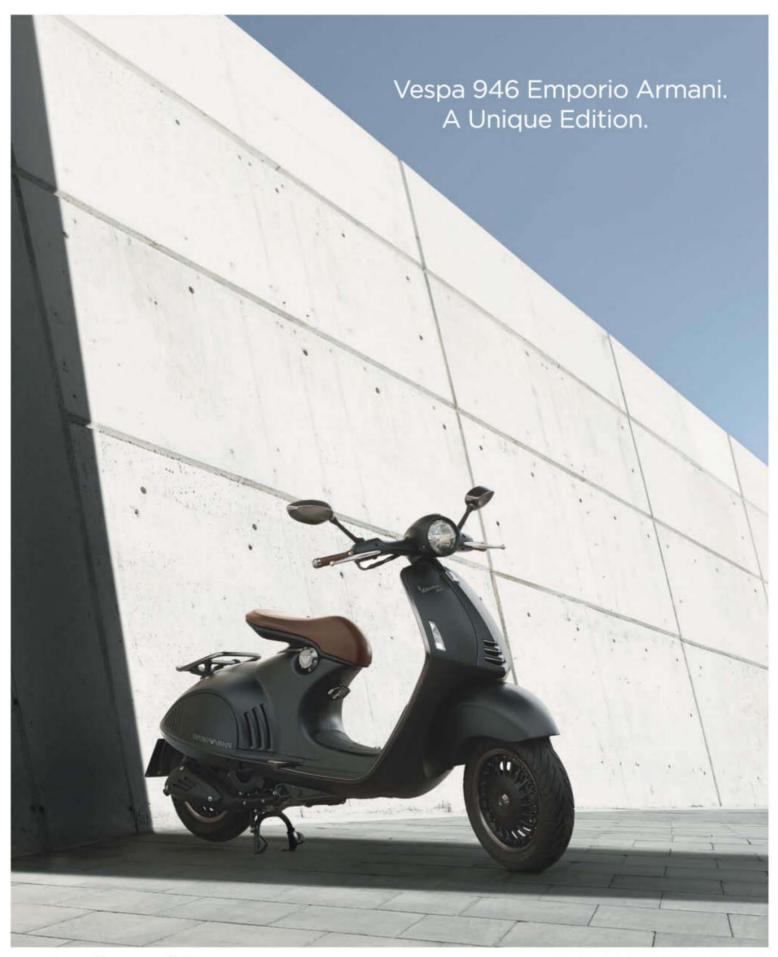




## CAUSE AND EFFECT

New community-minded hotels are not merely places to stay

Vienna's Magdas Hotel is decorated in a fashionable upcycled style, with mid-century furniture set against repurposed objects such as bicycle handlebars shaped into urban hunting trophies. But this is no trend-chasing; much of the decor was donated. Magdas is run by a charity, and alongside travellers on city breaks, refugees stay and work here. Similarly, at Vancouver's Skwachays Lodge, left, which opened in January, the money spent on rooms designed by Aboriginal artists funds 24 apartments for Aboriginal people at risk of homelessness. And in London from next spring, The Green Rooms will offer low-cost, high-design digs for artists visiting and working in the capital, in partnership with institutions such as the Barbican and the Royal Court, and subsidised by the adjoining regular hotel rooms.





## SOCIAL NETWORKS

The opening of New York's High Line in 2009 kick-started a worldwide trend for reimagining redundant transport routes as public spaces. Here are the latest worth tracking



## **OVERGROUND**

Not many people know that the Promenade Plantée in Paris predates the High Line by 16 years, but it's the French capital's Petite Ceinture, or Little Belt, that's currently in the spotlight. With just one small section officially open as a park in the 16th arrondissement, quirky venues such as urban farm and canteen La Recyclerie are popping up in deserted stations the length of the 19-mile loop. More permanent is Arbory, Melbourne's longest bar, which stretches along the old Sandridge train line - shuttered 30 years ago - at Flinders Street station. In Chicago The Bloomingdale Trail, a freight route elevated in 1913, is the centrepiece of The 606. which opened in June. And in Peckham, South London, a project is gaining support to transform an old coal siding into a raised park, The Coal Line.

## **UNDERGROUND**In London 30,000ft of disused

railway tunnels under Waterloo station have been taken over by sneakers brand Vans to create an indoor skate park. A little further south, former Blitz air-raid shelters have been turned into a subterranean farm with the help of a sophisticated lighting, irrigation and ventilation system. Backed by star chef Michel Roux Jr, the space 100ft below the Northern Line near Clapham North produces herbs, shoots and baby vegetables. Still in the planning stages is Manhattan's Lowline, which aims to transform an old trolley terminal under the Lower East Side into a park by funnelling natural light through fibreoptic cables. And in Washington DC, the Dupont Underground project will adapt a series of massive concrete passageways and platforms, part of an old electric streetcar system, into an art and cultural zone. In both Paris and London debates abound with clever concepts on how to renovate so-called 'ghost stations' on the Tube and Metro networks into useable spaces. Proposed plans include swimming pools and concert halls (Paris), and cycleways and restaurants (London). **TABITHA JOYCE** 



## GOTHE DISTANCE

Australia's most isolated city now rocks a round-the-clock scene









## ON LOCATION

# The Lobster

Flamingos and camels are not normally associated with the wilds of south-west Ireland, but Dromore Wood and its temporary inhabitants are all part of *The Lobster*, the latest film from Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos. In this unorthodox love story set in the near future, single people are arrested and transferred to The Hotel, where they are obliged to find a mate in 45 days. If they fail they are transformed into an animal of their choice (hence the flamingos) and released into The Woods. The film has already scooped the Jury Prize at this year's Cannes Film Festival, although Lanthimos is no stranger to accolades, having received an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Language Film for his second feature, *Dogtooth*.

Much of his latest movie was shot on location in and around the Parknasilla Resort & Spa outside the village of Sneem, County Kerry. The crew and cast, which includes Colin Farrell and Rachel Weisz, right, along with Léa Seydoux, Ben Whishaw, John C Reilly and Olivia Colman, moved into the hotel for the duration in what Reilly likened to a 'summer camp for film actors'. Overlooking the jagged inlets and quiet coves of Kenmare Bay, the Parknasilla is one of Ireland's classic country getaways (it turns 120 this year). On rare nights off, Packie's restaurant in the pretty village of Kenmare was the cast's haunt, where they dined on its standout crab cakes and, fittingly, roast lobster with garlic butter. AOIFE O'RIORDAIN Parknasilla Resort & Spa (www.parknasillaresort.com) has doubles from about £80. 'The Lobster' is released on 16 October



ALEX

PHOTOGRAPH: **DESPINA SPYROU** 

# Milano.



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Clockwise from this picture: Vena's Fizz House; Maine Craft Distilling; Eventide oyster restaurant; interiors shop K Colette; carpet at the Press Hotel; exterior of the hotel



Oregon's highest-density hipster town has a namesake rival in the East Coast state of Maine. Want lobster rolls and craft beer? Try the other Portland

he city's New England location might suggest white clapboard and russet leaves, but in fact its Downtown and Old Port areas are packed with 19th-century warehouses turned galleries, boutiques and bars.

STAY In the former offices of the Portland Press Herald, the seven-storey Press Hotel has rooms inspired by 1920s writers' offices, with letterpress art, vintage desks and Clark Kent-style glass doors, plus hot-ticket restaurant Union and drinking den Inkwell.

EAT Dinner crawls are a thing here: start with oysters at Eventide (they have 10 sparkling Maine varieties), add noodles at the just-opened Honey Paw, then dessert at dark-and-sexy Hugo's – they're all on the same block. Other standouts are Duckfat (try their poutine with duck gravy) and the brand new Bao Bao, which serves a Portland take on dumplings.

**DRINK** Coffee and hipsters go together like fixie bikes and turned-up jeans, so Portland knows its beans (try **Bard Coffee**, **Tandem** or **Speckled Ax**). The craft-beer scene is also big, with some of the major players, including **Allagash** and **Shipyard**, offering tours. **Novare Res Bier Café** in the Old Port has 25 beers on tap and 500 bottles. If gin is your thing, stop by **Maine Craft Distilling** for a tasting, then head to newcomer **Vena's Fizz House**, a master of artisan bitters, to buy a bottle or sample a cocktail.

SHOP Portland's shops are almost Scandi in their own whitewashed, airy way. K Colette on Commercial Street stocks beachy, vintage-inspired homewares and, just opposite, Portland Dry Goods Co sells East Coast hipster kit: washed-out tees, slubby knits and loafers. COLLETTE LYONS





## BATTLE OF THE PORTLANDS

## MAINE

**START THE DAY WITH** Breakfast buns from the Standard Baking Co: sticky, nutty, sugary. Kale who?

**THE UNIFORM** Hipster-on-sea: worn-in deck shoes without socks, waterproofs and button-down shirts. Boat optional.

THE DRINK Bunker Brewing Co's Czech Pils, crafted in a garage in a defunct scrapyard. LOCAL HERO American-lit heavyweight, the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. OFFICIAL SLOGAN Yes. Life's good here. (Smug much?)

## **OREGON**

**START THE DAY WITH** Breakfast puns from food cart Fried Egg I'm in Love (Yolko Ono or Free Range Against the Machine, anyone?).

THE UNIFORM Lumbersexual: think plaid shirt, impressive beard and MacBook Pro.
THE DRINK Single-origin, Chemex-made coffee from master roasters Coava – sipped with as much ceremony as a Château Lafite.
LOCAL HEROES Portland-born Nike founders Bill Bowerman and Phil Knight.
UNOFFICIAL SLOGAN Keep Portland Weird.

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## **WORD OF MOUTH**



oodbye boutique, hello concept hotel: the new word in affordable places to stay that get your artistic juices flowing. Inés Miró-Sans is the 31-year-old brain behind 67-room Casa Bonay, which opens this month in Barcelona's Dreta de l'Eixample neighbourhood. 'We're not interested in being hip,' she explains, 'we're looking to add ideas, layers and stimulation to the experience by collaborating with up-and-coming names of all ages.' So Miró-Sans has drawn together some of the city's most exciting talent to work with her on the hotel: designer duo Batabasta have made the guirky printed fabrics; cool juice bar Mother is in charge of the roof-garden-fresh smoothies and Brooklyn-based creative agency Studio Tack masterminded the transformation of the historic space into a place that feels 'lived in, eclectic and inviting with subtle winks of humour'.



Cheeky prints soften a lobby paved with street tiles that leads to an Asian-influenced restaurant headed by Estanislao Carenzo of Madrid's Sudestada, while some of the bedrooms keep their original roll-top marble baths. TARA STEVENS Doubles from about £95. www.casabonay.com

Creative thinkers unite to design Barcelona's hottest new opening

## **THE PRINTS: BATABASTA**

Spanish-Japanese duo Clara Arnús Montsalvatge and Leticia Cano Babá design hand-crafted shirts, but it's their witty graphics that pop up at Casa Bonay: on fabrics, wallpapers and staff uniforms. And yes, that is indeed a miniature naked man clambering up the fern on a cushion, above left.

#### THE JUICE: MOTHER

Like their El Raval original, Gemma Ponsa Salvador and Lili Figel's cold-pressed juice bar at Casa Bonay brims with innovations such as turmeric-infused 'gold milk' smoothies, plus there will be mini-bar concoctions from the rooftop garden.

### THE COFFEE: SATAN'S COFFEE CORNER

Young entrepreneur Marcos Bartolomé, *above*, leads a new generation of Barcelona baristas striving to usurp the beloved cortado with a fruitier filter coffee.

### **THE LIBRARY: BLACKIE BOOKS**

Local independent publisher Jan Marti offers a tantalising selection of slick magazines in the old concierge booth, as well as a monthly-changing compendium of thought-provoking books available to buy or rent for the duration of your stay.

### THE FURNITURE: TEIXIDORS AND AOO

Teixidors' Jordi Purrà uses the original floor tiles as the inspiration for the blue and ecru merino-wool blankets, while AOO's Marc Morro and Clara Quintana focus on simple wooden furniture.



## SPINNING PLATES

We first had a taste of DJs in the kitchen at the annual Amsterdam Dance Event Cook Off (14-18 October this year), where turntablers – including Nina Kraviz, Arthur Baker and 2014 champion Kolsch – donned chef hats and battled it out with their best dishes. It's now a trend that's making tracks in London and beyond, and as Smokey Tails' **Seth Troxler** says, 'DJ-ing and cooking are actually very similar disciplines: taking different ingredients and trying to figure out what works together.'

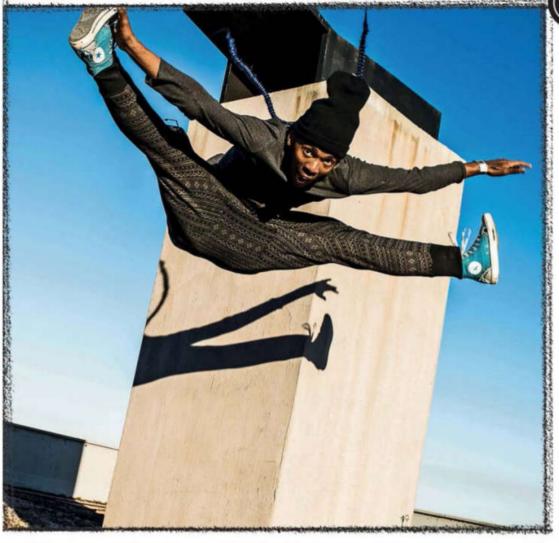
Australian DJ **Kaz James**' Grind cafés, *left*, are rolling out across the capital, all fuelled by loud tunes, neon signs and strong espressos. In Dalston, **Carl Clarke**'s reggae and funk beats blast from his restaurant Chick 'n' Sours, while **DJ Yoda** is serving up Texan-style meat at his newly opened Austen's Smokehouse in Kensal Rise to an occasional live set by the man himself.

Over in Brooklyn, LCD Soundsystem front man James Murphy recently opened The Four Horsemen, a white-on-wood bar and restaurant with one of the best organic wine lists in the city. On the American West Coast, Axwell of Swedish House Mafia teamed up with Grant Smillie to open EP & LP in West Hollywood earlier this spring – a modern Asian restaurant with a buzzy rooftop bar. And nearby in Silver Lake, Moby is about to climb the LA culinary charts with vegan joint Little Pine. CHLOE SACHDEV









# want to be in my canc?

A globe-trotting photographer has delved deep into the underground to track down the craziest rule-breaking fashion tribes

ack in 2009, a young Italian fashion photographer and art historian called Daniele Tamagni published Gentlemen of Bacongo, a book of arresting, wildly incongruous images of Congolese dandies wearing bright, exaggerated suits. Sapeurs (SAPE stands for La Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Elégantes) often own little more than their flashy threads, but their swagger and verve shines through in every shot. Against a backdrop of headlines about the escalating conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tamagni's joyous, startling depiction of hauteur and style in the most unlikely place made Gentlemen of Bacongo the must-have coffee-table book of 2010. The images went viral and Solange Knowles enlisted Congolese sapeurs as dancers for her 2012 music video Losing You.

In his follow-up, *Fashion Tribes*, 40-year-old Tamagni not only revisits his dapper friends in the Congo but also delves into other surprising subcultures: metalheads in Botswana, female wrestlers in Bolivia, punks in Burma, 'bling-bling' youth in Cuba and Jo-burg hipsters (including Lee-Chè 'RudeBoy' Janecke from dance outfit Vintage Crew, *pictured*). 'Sometimes we'd have weeks to do a well-planned story, on other occasions we'd have days and it was a case of shooting people in the street,' says Tamagni. But just how does a Milanbased fashion photographer stroll in and immediately gain people's confidence? 'There's no secret,' he smiles. 'I show up alone. I speak three languages, which helps. I research the culture extensively beforehand. I have no agenda: these are personal projects, not magazine commissions, so I can be free.'

It's always the same thing that attracts him to a tribe: 'The contrast between the clothes people wear and their everyday lives. I try to reveal the dreams of another identity, cherished by the subjects I photograph. I want to offer an overview of globalised style, but also to record the resistance to and preservation of traditions.' His most memorable project was in Botswana, where bands mix Eighties heavy metal and Western-cowboy style with African swagger. 'Their outward demeanour was intimidating, but underneath they were so gentle. I stay in touch with everyone. I want to go back and show them all this book.' ANNA HART 'Fashion Tribes' by Daniele Tamagni, Els van der Plas and Okwui Enwezor is out on 13 October (Abrams Books, £21.99)

# THE TRENDS TAKING OFF AND THOSE RUNNING OUT OF FUEL

#### X ARRIVALS 1

#### **JFK AIRPORT**

Finally becoming somewhere you actually want to spend time – both for humans (staying at the huge TWA flight centre, set to be converted by the team behind the High Line Hotel) and their furry friends (at new luxury pet terminal The ARK, with its bone-shaped lap pool and spa).

#### SOCIAL CURRENCY

A range of new start-ups tap into the power of peer-to-peer media to swap your pounds for euros, dollars or yen. Try it at WeSwap, CurrencyFair or Fluint.

#### **HOLIDAY HIGHS**

As cannabis tourism smartens up in the wake of more liberal laws, Budandbreakfast.com lists pot-friendly places to stay worldwide, and Cannacamp, now looking for an American base, will offer cookery and yoga.

#### X DEPARTURES

#### **GLAMPING**

Now we're 'champing' – that's bedding down in churches. Book your crypt trip through the Churches Conservation Trust in Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Kent, proper beds included.

#### **CURLY PAGES**

No more soggy novels poolside thanks to Bibliobath, which is launching the world's first waterproof books this month with a selection of short stories and poetry.

#### **ZOO HOTELS**

Australia's National Zoo has opened Jamala Wildlife Lodge with 18 suites in the giraffe, bear and monkey enclosures.

Not quite the same as a safari camp, is it?

i.....i



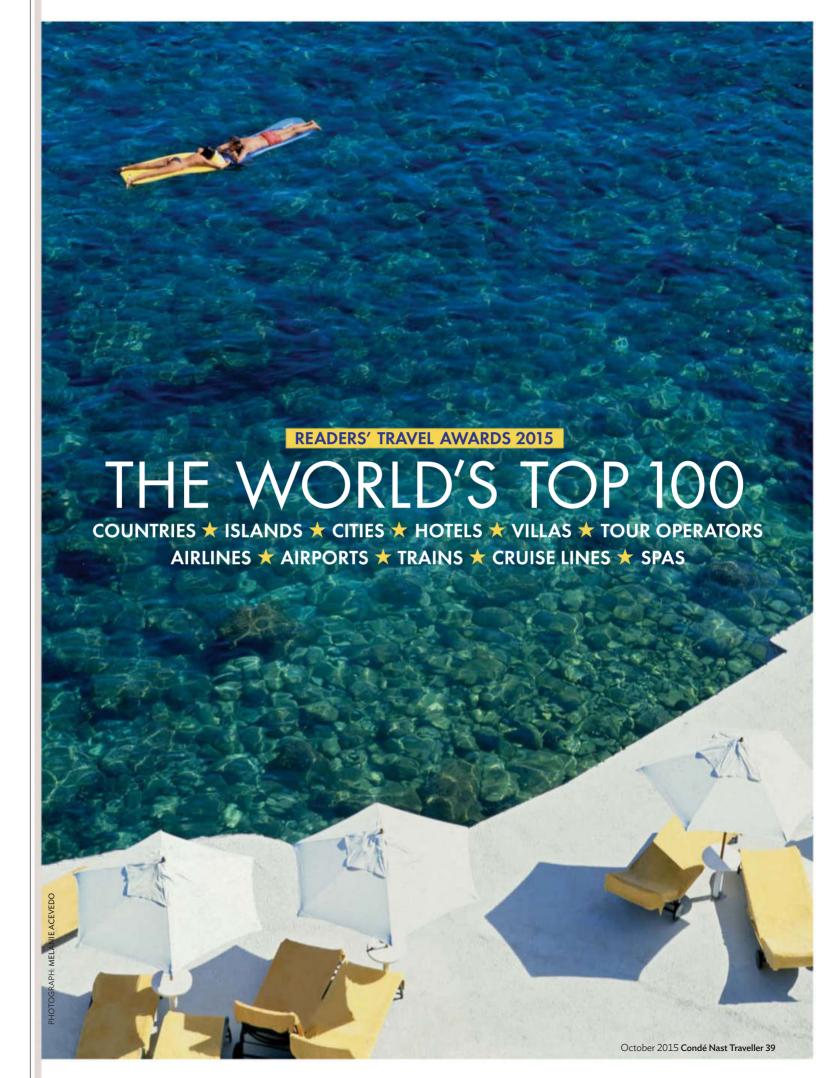


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# **DESTINATIONS**

#### **ISLANDS**

There's nothing austere about the abundance of love you continue to rain on the **Greek Islands**. They have fended off the competition by scoring exceptionally well on all six criteria we asked you to rate your favourite islands. Your marks for this year's runner-up, the **Balearic Islands**, also proved rock-solid, but it seems you will have to travel as far as the Maldives (followed by Seychelles and St Barth's) for the islands with the best beaches. Elsewhere, **St Lucia** achieved the highest score for its scenery, while **Bali** hit the high notes for its famously friendly people and **Sicily** took the biscotti for its scrumptious food.

- 1 Greek Islands 90.69
- 2 Balearic Islands 89.18
- 3 Maldives 88 29
- 4 Hawaiian Islands 88.08
- **5 Bali** 87.90
- **6 Mauritius** 86.69
- **7 Sicily** 85.49
- 8 Seychelles 84.86
- 9 St Barth's 83.80
- **10 St Lucia** 82.38

- **11 Koh Samui** 81.75
- **12 Jamaica** 80.85
- **13 Barbados** 80.71
- **14 Antigua** 80.11
- 15 Great Barrier Reef 78.45
- **16 Capri** 77.06
- **17 Sardinia** 75.23
- 18 Malta 74.32
- 19 Cuba 73.18
- 20 Lombok 71.40





#### **COUNTRIES**

Italy just keeps on giving. This is the fifth year in a row you have voted it your favourite country in the world, with very impressive scores in all six criteria on which we asked you to vote. But ultimately South Africa was awarded the highest marks for scenery, followed by Canada, Australia and New Zealand, demonstrating your abiding appreciation for epic landscapes. And where in the world do you feel most welcome? You insist that would be **Mexico**, followed closely by Thailand, while India is best for both culture and value for money.

- **1 Italy** 89.87
- 2 France 88.65
- **3 USA** 87.67
- 4 Spain 87.33
- **5 Greece** 87.21
- 6 Australia 87.12
- **7 New Zealand** 87.04
- **8 Thailand** 86.76
- **9 Turkey** 85.99
- **10 India** 85.86
- **11 South Africa** 84.87
- **12 Vietnam** 83.60
- **13 Sri Lanka** 82.21
- **14 Netherlands** 80.54
- **15 Mexico** 78.65
- **16 Portugal** 77.36
- **17** Ireland 75.52
- **18 Japan** 74.14
- **19 Canada** 72.51 **20 Morocco** 72.39





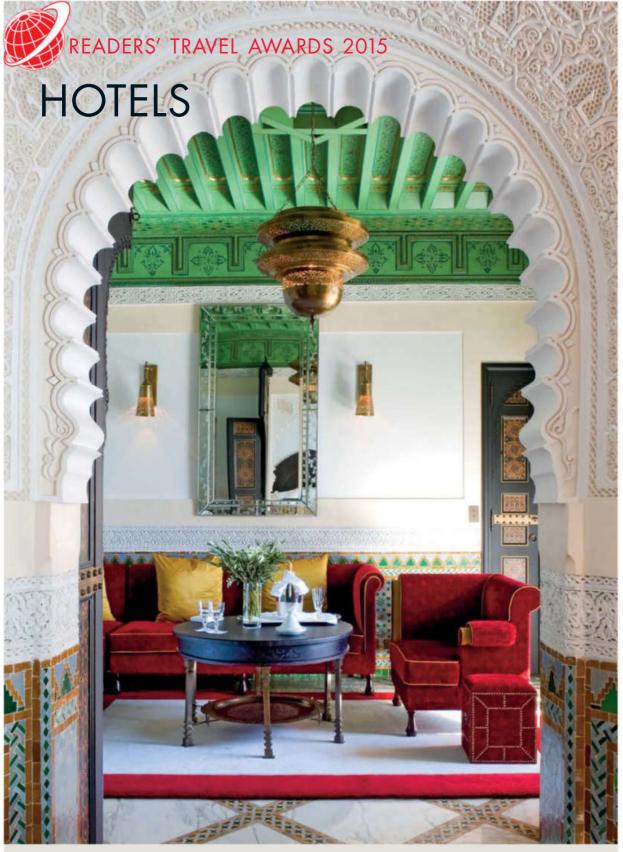
#### **UK CITIES**

Once again **London** got in a scrap for the top slot with its old rival Edinburgh, but in the end the English capital's peerless scores for eating and drinking and places to stay proved a knockout. Elsewhere, you believe Georgian beauty **Bath** has the finest architecture of all your favourite cities in the UK and you chose to earmark **Oxford** for a first in culture. But what if you'd rather stay out all night to get lucky? Manchester has proved it's up to that particular challenge with a high tally for nightlife, closely followed by lively Liverpool.

- **1 London** 86.41
- **2 Edinburgh** 85.56
- 3 Bath 83.67
- **4 York** 83.16
- **5 Glasgow** 82.63
- **6 Liverpool** 82.06
- **7 Manchester** 82.01
- **8 Cambridge** 80.20
- **9 Cardiff** 78.46
- $\textbf{10 Newcastle}\ 76.87$
- **11 Oxford** 76.85
- **12 Salisbury** 76.29
- **13 Brighton** 76.03
- $\textbf{14 Birmingham}\ 75.14$
- **15 Chester** 74.95

What are all these numbers? They are an index of satisfaction, scored out of a maximum of 100. In our Readers' Travel Awards 2015 questionnaire posted at www.cntraveller.com from 5 March to 4 May, you were asked to choose the best that the travel world has to offer – from hotels and spas to airlines and airports. You were then asked to rate your choices according to various criteria, such as service, design and value for money. From your responses, we calculated the average mark on each criterion, and used this to provide the overall satisfaction percentage figure that you see on these pages and in The World's Top 100 on page 58.





#### **OVERSEAS HOLIDAY HOTELS**

We know you have always liked **La Mamounia** in Marrakech, but this year your enthusiasm knew no bounds. The Moroccan classic not only won the award for the best holiday hotel in **THE MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA & THE INDIAN OCEAN** but also scored so highly it made the number-one spot in our 'best of the best' Top 100. You found it very difficult to fault the place, showering praise in all directions,

but in particular for design and rooms. Elsewhere, **Singita Grumeti** in Tanzania came out on top for both its smooth service and Serengeti location, solid all-rounder **One&Only Reethi Rah** in the Maldives for facilities, and recently refreshed **Ellerman House** in Cape Town for its old-world atmosphere.

In EUROPE, TURKEY & RUSSIA, Le Bristol Paris captured your imagination for its atmosphere and

#### THE MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA & THE INDIAN OCEAN

- 1 La Mamounia, Marrakech 93.76
- 2 Singita Grumeti, Tanzania 93.28
- 3 One&Only Reethi Rah, Maldives 91.93
- 4 Four Seasons Resort Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt 91.62
- **5 The Oberoi, Mauritius** 89.69
- 6 Fregate Island Private, Seychelles 88.67
- 7 Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru 86.73
- **8 Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town** 86.05
- 9 Singita Sabi Sand, South Africa 85.87
- 10 Qasr Al Sarab by Anantara, Abu Dhabi
- **11 Soneva Fushi, Maldives** 85.34
- 12 Raffles Praslin, Seychelles 83.76
- 13 Cheval Blanc Randheli, Maldives 81.89
- **14 Ellerman House, Cape** Town 81.41
- 15 The St Regis Mauritius Resort 80.71
- 16 The Chedi Muscat, Oman 78.77
- 17 Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru, Maldives 76.79
- **18 Kasbah Tamadot, Morocco** 75.22
- 19 One&Only The Palm, Dubai 73.84
- 20 La Residence, Franschhoek, South Africa 71.69

Above, a suite at La Mamounia, Marrakech

# Russell Bromley



Michelin-starred food, but **Amanzoe** in Greece won hands down for design (along with **JK Place** on Capri) and last year's winner, **Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc** in the South of France, for its elegant rooms and cosmic location. **Belmond La Residencia** in Mallorca hit the high notes for service, as did the beautiful **Grand Hotel a Villa Feltrinelli** on Lake Garda.

Your favourite place to stay in **THE AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN** is the recently revamped **Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France**, which you awarded remarkably high scores for all criteria, including design and service. Elsewhere in the Caribbean, you displayed a hearty appetite for the food at the **Viceroy Anguilla** and the atmosphere at **Parrot Cay by COMO** in the Turks & Caicos, while you reckon the Upper East Side location of **The Carlyle**, **A Rosewood Hotel** in New York cannot be bettered, even by the jaw-dropping views from the **Post Ranch Inn** in Big Sur, California.

This year's winner in **ASIA & THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT** is The Oberoi Udaivilas on Lake Pichola. which you insist is the best hotel in the region not only for location but also facilities. Runner-up Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok was singled out for its food (and with seven restaurants to choose from that's hardly surprising) and the Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai for its famously on-point Thai service. Elsewhere, the innovative Alila Villas **Uluwatu** in Bali attracted the highest score for design while you rose as one to give Raffles Singapore, a national monument which first opened in 1887, a standing ovation for its enduring charm and atmosphere.

Over in AUSTRALASIA & THE SOUTH PACIFIC, the Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island proved its mettle to leap into first place with monumental scores all round, while Huka Lodge in New Zealand, no stranger to these awards, came in at number two thanks to tip-top marks for both food and atmosphere. This year, for the first time, you also decided that The Byron at Byron Resort and Spa should be rewarded for its dreamy subtropical rainforest and beach location.

From top: view from Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island, Australia; Le Bristol Paris. Opposite from left: Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France, St Barth's; The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur

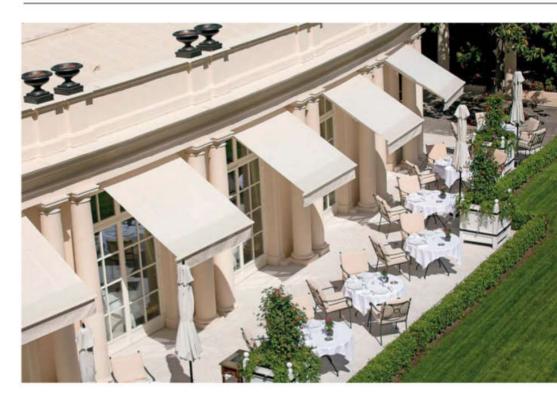
#### **AUSTRALASIA & THE SOUTH PACIFIC**

- 1 Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island, Australia 89 25
- 2 Huka Lodge, Taupo, New Zealand 88.59
- 3 Otahuna Lodge, Christchurch, New Zealand 87.90
- 4 The Byron at Byron Resort and Spa, Byron Bay, Australia 87.32
- **5 One&Only Hayman Island, Australia** 86.34
- 6 The St Regis Bora Bora Resort, French Polynesia

- 7 Qualia, Hamilton Island, Australia 84.54
- 8 Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa, Wolgan Valley, Australia 83.61
- **9 Freycinet Lodge, Tasmania** 82.51
- 10 Longitude 131°, Uluru, Australia 82.32
- 11 Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora, French Polynesia 81.94
- 12 Park Hyatt Sydney, Australia 81.17
- 13 Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa, French Polynesia 80.75

- 14 Blanket Bay, Glenorchy, New Zealand 78.95
- 15 Lizard Island, Queensland, Australia 77.06
- 16 InterContinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa, French Polynesia 76.76
- **17 Four Seasons Hotel Sydney, Australia** 76.04
- **18** Eagles Nest, Bay of Islands, New Zealand 74.32
- 19 The Langham, Sydney, Australia 72.31
- **20 QT Sydney, Australia** 70.39





#### THE AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN

- 1 Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France, St Barth's 93.12
- 2 Anse Chastanet, St Lucia 91.94
- 3 Parrot Cay by COMO, Turks & Caicos 90.57
- 4 The Carlyle, A Rosewood Hotel, New York 90.55
- 5 Eden Rock, St Barth's 88.44
- 6 Banyan Tree Mayakoba, Mexico 86.71
- 7 Amangiri, Utah 86.26
- 8 One&Only Ocean Club, Bahamas 86.05
- 9 Hotel Bel-Air, Los Angeles 84.80
- **10 Post Ranch Inn, Big Sur, California** 82.99

- 11 Shutters on the Beach, Santa Monica 82.37
- 12 Explora Patagonia Hotel Salto Chico, Chile 81.06
- 13 Crosby Street Hotel, New York 79.84
- **14** The Greenwich Hotel, New York 78.32
- 15 Viceroy Anguilla 78.17
- **16 Delano South Beach, Miami** 76.98
- 17 Inkaterra La Casona, Cusco, Peru 76.24
- **18 Sandy Lane, Barbados** 74.71
- **19 Ace Hotel, New York** 74 03
- 20 Belmond Palacio Nazarenas, Cusco, Peru 73.86



#### **EUROPE, TURKEY & RUSSIA**

- **1 Le Bristol Paris** 92.44
- 2 Amanzoe, Porto Heli, Greece 90.94
- 3 Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc, Antibes, France 90.26
- 4 Le Meurice, Paris 88.55
- 5 Belmond Hotel Splendido, Portofino, Italy 87.51
- 6 Belmond La Residencia, Mallorca 86.29
- 7 Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at the Bosphorus 85.03
- **8 Hotel de Russie, Rome** 84.43
- 9 Hotel Arts Barcelona 84.16
- 10 Grand Hotel a Villa Feltrinelli, Lake Garda, Italy 83.78

- 11 Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris 83.34
- 12 Belmond Hotel Cipriani, Venice 82.06
- 13 Villa d'Este, Lake Como, Italy 82.02
- 14 Four Seasons Hotel Ritz Lisbon 81.19
- **15 The Capri Palace Hotel & Spa, Capri, Italy** 80.98
- **16 JK Place Capri** 80.27
- 17 Four Seasons Hotel Firenze, Italy 78.21
- **18 Le Royal Monceau – Raffles Paris** 76.90
- 19 The Gritti Palace, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Venice 76.67
- **20 Conservatorium Hotel, Amsterdam** 74.25



#### **ASIA & THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT**

- 1 The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur 93.40
- 2 Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok 91.20
- 3 Raffles Singapore 89.13
- 4 The Datai Langkawi, Malaysia 88.47
- 5 Six Senses Yao Noi, Thailand 87.47
- **6 Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur** 85.47
- 7 The Fullerton Hotel, Singapore 84.16

- 8 Banyan Tree Phuket, Thailand 82.22
- 9 Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, India 82.03
- 10 Alila Villas Uluwatu, Bali 80.65
- **11 Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai, Thailand**80.63
- **12 Devi Garh by Lebua, Udaipur, India** 79.21
- 13 The Sarojin, Khao Lak, Thailand 77.18

- **14 The Leela Goa, India** 75.93
- 15 Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad 75.54
- **16 Amankila, Bali** 74.62
- **17 Amanpulo, Philippines** 73.83
- **18 Song Saa Private Island, Cambodia** 72.09
- 19 Aman at Summer Palace, Beijing 71.81
- 20 Four Seasons Resort Jimbaran Bay, Bali 71.60



#### **UK HOLIDAY HOTELS**

Three years ago The Pig hotel in the New Forest ambled in from nowhere and has now jostled past its rivals to settle at the top of your list of the best hotels in the UK for holidays. It has done this in part by providing unassailable value for money in an unimpeachable location, while this year's runner up, Babington House, attracted the highest scores for atmosphere, and London newbie Ham Yard Hotel for its punchy design. You'll be pleased to know that longtime favourite (and last year's winner) Chewton Glen is still ahead of the game for service, just in front of its sister hotel, Cliveden House. Elsewhere, you decided the food at Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons deserves special mention.

- 1 The Pig, Hampshire 86.09
- 2 Babington House, Somerset 84.75
- **3 Chewton Glen, Hampshire** 83.75
- 4 Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Oxfordshire 82.18
- **5 Lime Wood, Hampshire** 80.21
- **6 Cliveden House, Berkshire** 79.87
- **7 The Goring, London** 78.09 **8 Barnsley House,**
- Gloucestershire 77.39
- **9 Ham Yard Hotel, London** 75.60
- **10 Coworth Park, Berkshire** 74.75

- **11 The Soho Hotel, London** 73.25
- 12 The Scarlet Hotel, Cornwall 72.43
- 13 Lucknam Park Hotel & Spa, Wiltshire 70.41
- 14 Gleneagles, Perthshire
- 70.11
- **15 The Balmoral Hotel, Edinburgh** 69.70
- 16 The Royal Crescent Hotel, Bath 69.60
- 17 Calcot Manor, Oxfordshire 69.35
- 18 The Witchery by the Castle, Edinburgh 68.92
- 19 Dormy House,Worcestershire 68.4920 Gidleigh Park, Devon 67.72

#### When it comes to signing on the dotted line, London's a done deal. This year, all 15 UK hotels

**UK BUSINESS HOTELS** 

you rated highest for business trips are in the capital. The ultimate winner, **Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park**, was singled out for its restaurants and Knightsbridge location, while **Claridge's** was lauded for its impeccable service (closely followed by **The Connaught**), **Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard** was awarded the

Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard was awarded the highest score for its lofty rooms and Rosewood London bowled you over for its innovative design.



- **1 Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London** 85.84
- 2 Claridge's, London 84.04
- **3 The Connaught, London** 83.93
- 4 Rosewood London 82.94
- **5** The Savoy, London 80.98
- 6 Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard, London 80.91
- **7 The Dorchester, London** 79.24
- **8 Corinthia Hotel London** 77.92
- **9 The Berkeley, London** 77.69
- **10 Bulgari Hotel & Residences, London** 76.10
- 11 Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane 75.28
- **12 InterContinental London Park Lane** 75.14
- **13 Haymarket Hotel, London** 74.23
- **14 Brown's Hotel, London** 73.11
- **15 The Langham, London** 71 72

From top: The Pig; Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London; The Peninsula Hong Kong

#### **OVERSEAS BUSINESS HOTELS**

You reckon a stay at **The Peninsula Hong Kong** is the business, thanks largely
to its high standards of service, an all-important
attribute you also singled out about **The Taj Mahal Palace** in Mumbai. Elsewhere, the
elegant **Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris** received top billing for its rooms and
the **Mandarin Oriental New York** for its
Columbus Circle location and stellar views.



- 1 The Peninsula Hong Kong 88.77
- **2 The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai** 87.16
- **3 Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris** 86 30
- 4 The St Regis Doha, Qatar 84.46
- 5 Mandarin Oriental New York 83.13
- 6 The Plaza, New York 81.52
- 7 Park Hyatt Tokyo 79.66
- 8 Grosvenor House, A Luxury
- Collection Hotel, Dubai 79.95
- 9 The Oberoi, Gurgaon 77.52
- 10 The Leela Palace, New Delhi 76.09
- 11 Hotel Ritz, Madrid 75.88
- 12 The Peninsula New York 78.72
- 13 Hotel Principe di Savoia, Milan 73.42
- 14 Bulgari Hotel Milan 72.20
- 15 Armani Hotel Dubai 71.00
- 16 The Ritz-Carlton, Istanbul 70.96
- 17 Park Hyatt Melbourne 70.91
- **18 The Opposite House, Beijing** 70.86
- 19 Island Shangri-La Hong Kong 70.6120 Çirağan Palace Kempinski, Istanbul 70.37

HOTOGRAPHS: MATTHEW BUCK; MARK PARREN TAYLOR









#### BEST HOTEL IN THE WORLD FOR DESIGN

HAM YARD HOTEL, LONDON

Nobody, it seems, does it better than Kit Kemp. As owner and design director of Firmdale Hotels, she has injected a sense of vibrancy and fun into what was once a grey old world. This year you declared Ham Yard your favourite hotel for design and it represents Kemp at the height of her powers: witty and quirky, yes, but also incredibly smart and very, very British.

The Croc Bowling Alley at Ham Yard Hotel photographed by Matthew Buck

#### **BEST HOTEL IN THE WORLD FOR SERVICE**

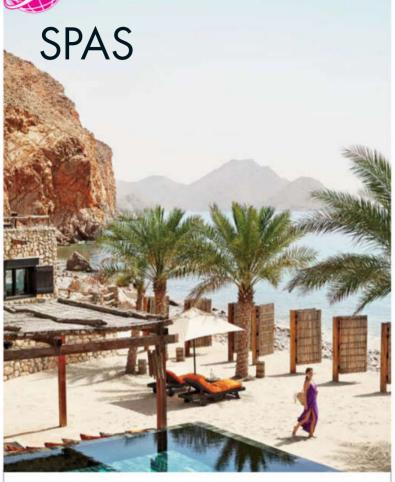
#### SINGITA GRUMETI, TANZANIA

Let's not beat about the bush: Singita changed the way we safari forever. And not just with its beautiful lodges and impeccable conservation credentials. You insist it's really all about the guides and trackers, chefs, cleaners and waiters who all pull together to create the magic that makes this your favourite place to stay for service.

Singita Sabora Tented Camp at Singita Grumeti photographed by Adriaan Louw







#### **OVERSEAS HOTEL SPAS**

For pampering par excellence, you can't get enough of the spa at Six Senses Zighy Bay Oman, especially its treatments. Last year's winner, the One&Only Spa by ESPA at Reethi Rah in the Maldives, is still your firm favourite for its individual approach. Elsewhere, you say the true beauty of COMO Shambhala Retreat in the Caribbean lies with its airy bedrooms, and there are few things more edifying than the beauty products at The Spa My Blend by Clarins at Le Royal Monceau in Paris.

- 1 Six Senses Spa, Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman 87.34
- 2 One&Only Spa by ESPA, One&Only Reethi Rah, Maldives 87.27
- 3 COMO Shambhala Retreat, Parrot Cay by COMO, Turks & Caicos 86 06
- 4 The Spa My Blend by Clarins, Le Royal Monceau - Raffles Paris 84.91
- 5 The Oriental Spa, Mandarin Oriental Bangkok 82.93
- 6 The Spa, The Nam Hai, Hoi An, Vietnam 81.96
- 7 The Spa and Ayurvedic Resort, Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru 80.72
- 8 Banyan Tree Spa, Banyan Tree Phuket Thailand 80.17
- 9 Cheval Blanc Spa, Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France, St Barth's 78 61
- 10 Sense, A Rosewood Spa, Rosewood Mayakoba, Mexico 77.64

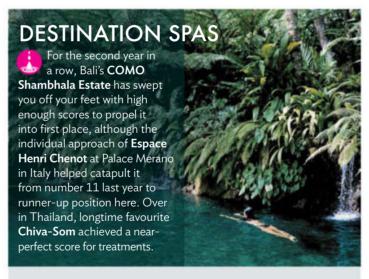
- 11 The Spa, Royal Mansour, Marrakech 77.17
- 12 U Spa by Constance, Contance Le Prince Maurice, Mauritius 76.21
- 13 One&Only Spa, One&Only Le Saint Géran, Mauritius 76.07
- 14 Spa Le Bristol by La Prairie, Le Bristol Paris 75.35
- 15 LIME Spa, Huvafen Fushi, Maldives 74.48
- **16** The Datai Spa, The Datai Langkawi, Malaysia 72.97
- 17 Banyan Tree Spa, Banyan Tree Seychelles 72.86
- 18 Victoria-Jungfrau Spa, Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa, Switzerland 72.08
- **19 The Spa at Sandy Lane, Barbados** 70.26
- **20** The Spa at Four Seasons Resort Seychelles 69.03

#### **UK HOTEL SPAS**

Your favourite spa in a UK hotel is at **Bulgari Hotel & Residences** in London. Why? You think it does everything well, in particular beauty products. This year's runner-up, just down the road at the **Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park**, floated to the top thanks to its superb treatments, while it's crystal clear that the individual approach at **Babington House**'s **Cowshed Spa** is very much to your liking.

- **1** The Bulgari Spa, Bulgari Hotel & Residences, London 86.70
- 2 The Spa at Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London 86.66
- **3 The Spa, Chewton Glen, Hampshire** 85.71
- 4 ESPA Life at Corinthia, Corinthia Hotel London 85.35
- **5 Cowshed Spa, Babington House, Somerset** 83.96
- 6 The Spa, Coworth Park, Berkshire 82.66
- 7 Sequoia, The Grove 82.46 8 ESPA Life, Gleneagles, Perthshire 80.85

- **9** The Spa, Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane 79.97
- **10** The Dorchester Spa, The Dorchester, London 79.69
- 11 The Spa at Lucknam Park, Wiltshire 77.94
- 12 Herb House, Lime Wood, Hampshire 76.38
- 13 Aman Spa, The Connaught, London 75.83
- 14 C-Side Spa, Cowley Manor, Gloucestershire 73.99
- **15** The Spa, Haymarket Hotel, London 72.71



- 1 COMO Shambhala Estate, Bali 91 31
- 2 Espace Henri Chenot, Palace Merano, Italy 89.57
- **3 Chiva-Som, Hua Hin, Thailand** 88.26
- 4 Cal-a-Vie Health Spa, California, USA 86.96
- 5 Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa, Baden-Baden, Germany 86.37
- 6 Banyan Tree Spa Sanctuary, Phuket, Thailand 84.31
- 7 Mii Amo Spa at Enchantment Resort, Arizona, USA 83.93
- **8** The Original FX Mayr Health Center, Austria 82.57
- 9 Parkhotel Igls, Austria 81.80
- 10 Monart, Co Wexford, Ireland

- 11 SHA Wellness Clinic, Alicante, Spain 79.72
- 12 Les Sources de Caudalie, Bordeaux, France 79.41
- 13 The BodyHoliday, LeSport, St Lucia 78.05
- 14 Grayshott, Surrey 77.91
- 15 Terme di Saturnia Spa & Golf Resort, Italy 76.56
- **16 Clinique La Prairie, Switzerland** 74.64
- **17** Ananda in the Himalayas, India 74.43
- 18 L'Institut Guerlain, Paris 73.84
- 19 Lefay Resort & Spa Lago di Garda, Italy 73.24
- 20 Therme Vals, Switzerland 71.10

# SCHOOLS LIVE! EVENUE SURFACE SURFACE

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Mrs Carol Evelegh Principal The Kindergartens



Mrs Emma Goldsmith Headmistress Winchester House School



Mr Andrew Halls Headmaster King's College School, Wimbledon



Dr Niall Hamilton Senior admissions tutor Marlborough College



Mrs Rosemary Herbert Registrar Sussex House School



Mrs Sally Hobbs Headmistress Orchard House (1993-2015)



Mr James Hooke Headmaster Harrodian



Mr Tony Little Headmaster Eton (2002-2015)



Mrs Helen Lowe Headmistress Bute House



Mr Eddy Newton
Principal
The Cothill
Educational Trust



Mrs Samantha Price Headmistress Benenden



Sir Anthony Seldon Master Wellington College (2006-2015)



Dr Joseph Spence Master Dulwich College



Mr Ben Thomas Headmaster Thomas's, Battersea



Dr Anthony Wallersteiner Headmaster Stowe School

# ON THE MOVE

#### **AIRLINES**

One thing's for sure, you don't like airplane food. On that criterion alone, few airlines would take off (in this regard, Turkish Airlines and Singapore Airlines appear to be notable exceptions). Whether you are off on a **SHORT-HAUL** or **LONG-HAUL HOLIDAY**, your instinct is to fly British Airways. You say it is ahead of the competition in almost all regards and in particular for its service and range of routes. Your first choice for BUSINESS travel is Qatar Airways, as you have a thing about its airport lounges, service and punctuality.

#### **SHORT-HAUL HOLIDAY**

#### 1 British Airways 82.6

- 2 Swiss International
- Air Lines 81.21 3 Turkish Airlines 80.28
- **4 Lufthansa** 79.47
- **5 EasyJet** 78.03
- **6 Air France** 77.40
- **7 SAS** 77.00
- **8 Aer Lingus** 75.54
- **9 Jet2.com** 74.38
- **10 KLM** 72.88

#### **LONG-HAUL HOLIDAY**

- 2 Qatar Airways 83.55
- 3 Emirates 81.54 4 Qantas 81.50
- 5 Cathay Pacific 79.58
- 6 Singapore Airlines 77.50 7 Etihad Airways 76.65 8 Virgin Atlantic 76.13

- 9 Air New Zealand 74.18
- **10 KLM** 74.13

#### **BUSINESS**

- **2** Emirates 82.78
- 3 British Airways 82.64
- 4 Singapore Airlines 81.77
- 5 Etihad Airways 81.73
- **6 Qantas** 81.46
- **7 Turkish Airlines** 79.49
- 8 Swiss International
- Air Lines 78.85

  9 Virgin Atlantic 77.14
- 10 Cathay Pacific 75.03

### **AIRPORTS**

This is the fifth time over the past decade that you have voted Singapore's Changi Airport your number-one flight hub, and the first time Hamad International Airport in Doha has made an appearance on this list. Elsewhere, Norman Foster's Hong Kong International was handed top marks for design and **Dubai** remains ahead for its shops. Closer to home, Heathrow Terminal 5 did well for its flight information and restaurants.

- 2 Heathrow Terminal 5, London 82.32
- 3 Hong Kong International Airport 82.18
- 4 Mumbai Airport 81.31
- **5 Dubai International Airport** 80.99
- 6 Hamad International Airport, Doha 79.81
- 7 London City Airport 79.53
- 8 Sydney Airport 78.68
- 9 Incheon International Airport, Seoul 77.89
- 10 Schiphol, Amsterdam 76.43
- 11 Munich Airport 74.52
- 12 Zürich Airport 74.27
- 13 Frankfurt Airport 73.32
- 14 Kuala Lumpur International Airport 71.46
- 15 Copenhagen Airport 69.93







## **ORGANISERS**



#### TOUR OPERATORS

The Turquoise Holiday Company is your favourite **TOUR OPERATOR** thanks to reliability and service. You reckon last year's winner **Carrier** is still first-rate for range of places to stay, and seek out **Trailfinders** for its variety of destinations. In the **SPECIALIST TOUR OPERATOR** category, **Scott Dunn** led the way for reliability, as did runner-up **Audley Travel** for service; but for level of expertise in spas there's no touching **Healing Holidays**, and Natural World Safaris is a marvel for first-hand knowledge of destinations.

#### **TOUR OPERATORS**

- **1** The Turquoise Holiday Company 84.93
- 2 Carrier 83.55
- 3 Trailfinders 81.72
- 4 Abercrombie & Kent 80.33
- 5 Kuoni 79 62
- 6 Virgin Holidays 78.46
- **7 Hayes & Jarvis** 76.63
- 8 Elegant Resorts 75.56
- 9 Destinology 74.73
- **10 Wexas Travel** 74.58
- **11 Red Savannah** 74.50
- **12 Steppes Travel** 74.26
- **13 Cox & Kings** 72.82
- **14 ITC Luxury Travel** 71.46
- 15 The Ultimate Travel Company 70.71

#### SPECIALIST TOUR OPERATORS

- **1 Scott Dunn** 85.40
- 2 Audley Travel 84.73
- 3 Bridge & Wickers 84.52
- 4 Journey Latin America 82.46
- 5 Natural World Safaris 80.49
- 6 Healing Holidays 79.99
- **7 Powder Byrne 79**.44
- 8 Africa Travel 77.66
- 9 Cazenove+Loyd 76.57
- **10** Greaves Travel 74.47

#### VILLA RENTAL COMPANIES

When it comes to finding a desirable home from home, Abercrombie & Kent Villas is your best bet for presentation of the houses it has on offer and The Thinking **Traveller** for on-the-ground support. **Owners Direct** scored highest for its range of villas, while newcomer Airbnb grabbed your attention for its value for money.

#### **1 Abercrombie & Kent Villas** 85.19

2 The Thinking Traveller 83.11

3 Scott Dunn Villas 81.90

4 SJ Villas 81.16 5 James Villas 79.98

**6 Airbnb** 79.45

**7 Simpson Travel** 78.48

8 CV Villas 77.06

9 Owners Direct 75.27

10 Villas of Distinction 73.97





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# THE WORLD'S TOP 100



- 1 La Mamounia, Marrakech 93.76
- 2 The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur 93.40
- 3 Singita Grumeti, Tanzania 93.28
- 4 Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France, St Barth's 93.12
- 5 Le Bristol Paris 92.44
- 6 Anse Chastanet, **St Lucia** 91.94
- 7 One&Only Reethi Rah, Maldives 91.93
- 8 Four Seasons Resort Sharm El Sheikh. Egypt 91.62
- 9 COMO Shambhala Estate, Bali 91.31
- 10 Mandarin Oriental, **Bangkok** 91.20
- 11 Amanzoe, Porto Heli, Greece 90 94
- **12 Greek Islands** 90.69
- 13 Parrot Cay by COMO,

Turks & Caicos 90.57

- 14 The Carlyle, A Rosewood (1) 40 The Byron at Byron Hotel, New York 90.55
- 15 Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc, Antibes, France 90.26
- **16 Italy** 89.87
- 17 The Oberoi, Mauritius
- 18 Espace Henri Chenot, Palace Merano, Italy 89 57
- 19 Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island, Australia 89.25
- 20 Balearic Islands 89.18
- **21 Raffles Singapore** 89.13
- 22 The Peninsula Hong Kong 88.77
- 23 Fregate Island Private, Seychelles 88.67
- **24 France** 88.65
- 25 Huka Lodge, Taupo, New Zealand 88 59
- 26 Le Meurice, Paris 88.55
- 27 The Datai Langkawi,

- Malaysia 88.47
- 28 Eden Rock, St Barth's 88 44
- 29 Maldives 88.29
- 30 Chiva-Som, Hua Hin, Thailand 88 26
- **31 Paris** 88.13
- 32 Hawaiian Islands 88.08
- 33 Bali 87.90
- 👔 33 Otahuna Lodge, Christchurch. New Zealand 87.90
- 35 USA 87.67
- 36 Belmond Hotel Splendido, Portofino, Italy 87.51
- 37 Six Senses Yao Noi, Thailand 87.47
- 38 Six Senses Spa, Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman 87.34
- **39 Spain** 87.33
- Resort and Spa, Byron Bay, Australia 87.32
- 41 One&Only Spa by ESPA, One&Only Reethi Rah, Maldives 87 27
- **42 Greece** 87.21
- 43 New York 87.19
- 44 The Taj Mahal Palace, **Mumbai** 87.16
- 45 Australia 87.12
- 46 New Zealand 87.04
- 🖲 47 Cal-a-Vie Health Spa California, USA 86.96
- 48 Venice Simplon-Orient-Express 86.93
- 49 Thailand 86.76
- 50 Four Seasons Resort Maldives Landaa Giraavaru 86.73
- 👔 51 Banyan Tree Mayakoba, **Mexico** 86.71
- 🚺 52 The Bulgari Spa, Bulgari 🕕 76 Edinburgh 85.56

- Hotel & Residences. **London** 86.70
- **53 Mauritius** 86.69
- 54 The Spa at Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London 86.66
- 55 London 86.41
- 56 Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa, Baden-Baden, Germany 86.37
- 57 One&Only Hayman Island, Australia 86.34
- 58 Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris 86.30
- 59 Belmond La Residencia, Mallorca 86 29
- **60 Amangiri, Utah** 86.26
- 61 Crystal Cruises 86.20
- **62 Barcelona** 86.18
- 63 The Pig, Hampshire 86.09
- 64 COMO Shambhala Retreat, Parrot Cay by COMO, Turks & Caicos 86 06
- 65 Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town 86.05
- 66 One&Only Ocean Club, Bahamas 86.05
- 67 Turkey 85.99
- **68 Rome** 85.89
- **69 Venice** 85.88
- (1) 70 Singita Sabi Sand, South Africa 85.87
- 71 India 85 86
- 72 Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London 85.84
- 73 Pride of Africa, Rovos Rail, South Africa 85.81
- 🕕 74 The Spa, Chewton Glen, Hampshire 85.71
- 75 Qasr Al Sarab by
- Anantara, Abu Dhabi 85 67

- **77 Sicily** 85.49
- 78 The St Regis Bora Bora Resort, French Polynesia 85.49
- 79 Tai Lake Palace. Udaipur 85.47
- **80 Scott Dunn** 85.40
  - 81 Belmond Royal Scotsman 85.36
- 82 ESPA Life at Corinthia, Corinthia Hotel London 85.35
- 83 Soneva Fushi, Maldives 85.34
- 84 Abercrombie & Kent Villas 85.19
- 85 Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at the Bosphorus 85.03
  - 86 The Turquoise Holiday **Company** 84.93
- 87 The Spa My Blend by Clarins, Le Royal Monceau - Raffles Paris 84.91
- **88 South Africa** 84.87
- **89 Seychelles** 84.86
- 90 Hotel Bel-Air, Los Angeles 84.80
- 91 Babington House, **Somerset** 84.75
- **92 Audley Travel** 84.73
- 93 Qualia, Hamilton Island, Australia 84.54
- **94 Bridge & Wickers** 84.52
- 95 Celebrity Cruises 84.47 96 The St Regis Doha,
- **Qatar** 84.46
- 97 Hotel de Russie, **Rome** 84.43
- **98 Qatar Airways** 84.41
- 99 Banyan Tree Spa Sanctuary, Phuket, Thailand 84.31
- 100 The Fullerton Hotel, Singapore 84.16



#### HOW OUR QUESTIONNAIRE PRODUCED YOUR 'BEST OF THE BEST' LIST

Questionnaires were posted at www.cntraveller.com from 5 March to 4 May. The results were collated and analysed by an independent market-research company called Market Management. The 25 categories for nominations are listed below, with the criteria by which they were judged. Figures for all criteria and the Top 100 are percentages representing overall average levels of satisfaction.

Countries Scenery • Food • Culture • Places to stay • Value for money • People Islands Beaches • Scenery • Food • Places to stay • People • Value for money UK & overseas cities Architecture • Culture • Restaurants and bars • Nightlife • People • Places to stay **UK holiday hotels** Design • Value for money • Food • Location • Service • Rooms • Facilities • Atmosphere **UK & overseas business** hotels Design • Value for money • Food • Location • Service • Rooms • Facilities • Atmosphere **Overseas holiday hotels**: **Europe, Turkey & Russia; the Americas & the Caribbean; the Middle East, Africa** & the Indian Ocean islands; Asia & the Indian subcontinent; Australasia & the South Pacific Design • Value for money • Food • Location • Service • Rooms • Facilities • Atmosphere Tour operators Reliability \* Variety of destinations \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist tour operators Reliability \* Level of expertise \* Service \* Ranges of places to stay \* First-hand knowledge of destination Specialist \* First-hand know \*First-hand knowledge of destination Luxury train operators Food \* Service \* Itinerary \* Design \* Cabins \* Entertainment Villa rental companies Range of destinations \* Value for money \* Presentation of villas \* On-the-ground support Spas in UK & overseas hotels Treatments \* Individual approach \* Exercise programmes \* Beauty products \* Bedrooms (if applicable) Destination spas Treatments \* Individual approach \* Exercise programmes \* Beauty products \* Bedrooms Cruise lines: small & large ships Design \* Facilities \* Food \* Cabins \* Service \* Entertainment \* Itinerary Airlines: k long-haul holidays Food • Airport lounge • Service • Punctuality • Range of routes • Loyalty reward schemes • In-flight entertainment Airlines: business travel Food • Airport lounge • Service • Punctuality • Range of routes • Loyalty reward schemes • In-flight entertainment Airports Design • Flight information • Restaurants • Location • Shops • Efficiency of security checks



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# SOMEWHERE FORTHEWEEKEND?

The Swedish city of Malmö is a shiny new pin on the food map of Europe. Even Noma-spoilt Danes are crossing the border to check out the eco-chic hangouts along its revamped docks

By Jonathan Bastable. Photographs by Øivind Haug

ALMO. IT SOUNDS LIKE the acronym for some newminted cultural destination —
The Museum of Appealing, Likeable and Memorable Objects, say. And though you know very well that it is Sweden's third city (of course you do), it might be a struggle to mark the right spot on a map of Scandinavia.

But if you have travelled in Scandinavia at all, you have probably been quite close to this fabulous little place. Kastrup, Copenhagen airport, is just a hop across the magnificent, 10-mile-long Oresund bridge. From Danish air terminal to Swedish town centre takes less time than the Gatwick Express to London Victoria. The marvel of the bridge has been there for 15 years, but it seems that people have only just started noticing what a great destination there is at the other end of it. The poker-faced inspectors from Michelin, for example, turned their gaze on Malmö for the first time this past year. They awarded stars to three restaurants, an impressive tally for such a small place. But the fact is, Malmö has had a lively and diverse food scene for some time. It is fuelled by the healthy appetites of its youthful population median age 36 – and by the sophisticated tastes of overnighters and day-trippers from Copenhagen.

The old city of Malmö is as strollable as Bruges, as bustling as Brighton, as bikeable as Amsterdam. And as in the

Dutch city, you are never far from a canal; they form a rough oblong marking the line of the old city walls, and they meander lazily through the green and peaceful parks. At the heart of the old town is Lilla Torg, the little square, which sits like an annexe on one corner of Stortorget, or big square. The little one is much nicer – because of its human scale and because it is crammed like a Christmas stocking with lively bars, cafés and restaurants. Half the population head there for After Work,

# IT SEEMS AS IF PEOPLE HAVE JUST NOTICED THE GREAT TOWN AT THE OTHER END OF THE BRIDGE

the Scandi-English term for Happy Hour. After Work begins commendably early, about four o'clock, and lasts for a good three hours. So what better way to spend a first night in Malmö than to sit outside a bar – **Mello Yello** or **Moosehead** – drinking in the pale warmth of a Swedish evening, toying with some salmon and 'bald potatoes', and planning your itinerary for the next day or two?

Malmö makes for a wonderful weekend away because there are enough things to see to fill a few days, but not so many that you will come away feeling you haven't covered the ground.

Kick off with a short visit to **Sankt Petri Kyrka**, St Peter's Church. Its
exterior is a symphony in red brick,
but the inside is bridal white. This is
not minimalism but vandalism – the
once colourful walls were painted
over during the Reformation, but the
effect is accidentally stunning; it magnifies
the ribby vault of the ceiling. The
brightness of the day streams in through
the windows, illuminating the interior
like sunbeams striking an iceberg.

A couple of minutes' walk from the church is the lovely Moderna Museet, housed in another masterful example of the brickie's art, a small Art Nouveau edifice that was once Malmö's power station. On the day I visited there was a great exhibition of works by 20th-century artist Nils Dardel. He painted, on the one hand, cartoonish tableaux with names like The Dying Dandy; and, on the other, beautiful and by all accounts rather flattering portraits of Swedish high society. He also travelled the world, soaking up locations and styles wherever he went. He was a painter who dipped his brush in the pot of Cubism while in Paris, and produced naïve landscapes populated with wild beasts after encountering Henri Rousseau. It is a strangely disjointed exhibition, as if the kooky idea behind it was to showcase a bunch of different artists who all happen to share the same name.

Your next stop should be **Malmöhus**, the city's castle, or the remains of



From left: the pier near Ribersborgs Kallbadhus; a red-gooseberry and blackcurrant pudding at Snapphane; the interior of Salt & Brygga restaurant

➤ it. The functionalist building behind the medieval facade contains a strange two-handed museum. One part is old-school natural history with glass cabinets occupied by stuffed beasts: seals, stoats, ducks, wolves, snarling martens and a lion frozen forever in mid-pounce. Some of the animals are displayed apologetically alongside the articles that have traditionally been made from them: leopard-skin coats, crocodile shoes, whalebone corsets, snakeskin ties. Upstairs, the museum is something else entirely: a kind of mini-V&A with household objects and furniture, many of them arranged as scenes of Swedish homes at different points on the social scale and the historical timeline.

Many of the pieces – the polished tables, the soup tureens and the inlaid sideboards – are very fine. Appealing, Likeable and Memorable, in fact. And you can discern in them the roots of contemporary Scandinavian design, which can be seen all over Malmö, and bought and taken home too. Drop by the **Form/Design Center**, which is in an old grain store on the edge of Lilla Torg. There is a decent café on the ground floor, a shop full of desirable bits and bobs on the top floor, and in between a changing exhibition of new

work, most of it by students or recent graduates. It is all attractive and witty: a desk with a gentle indentation on its surface, intended to cradle a tired head; a ladder with rungs constructed from calligraphic curves, so that the whole thing looks like a doodle drawn by someone putting a fountain pen through its paces.

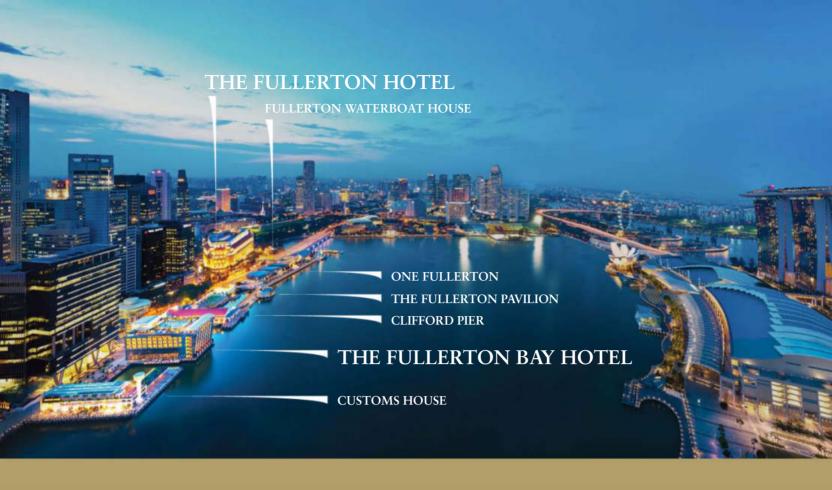
# IN A LOCAL CORNER OF TOWN STALLHOLDERS CUT WATERMELON INTO HUGE PINK WEDGES

For vintage Swedish design that you can own, head south along Fersens väg. You will soon find yourself in a grid of streets with 1920s apartment blocks as angular and elegant as a flapper's elbow. Duck down a sidestreet – Helmfeltsgatan, for example – and you are among runs of antique shops selling all sorts of primary-colour Nordic bricolage from the 1970s on: pea-green patterned platters, yellow jugs, bright blue ovoid teapots. Cross back over Fersens väg and you are a few steps from Davidshallstorg, a quiet residential square with several good coffee shops and a *frisør* where there's

a bearded barber who would not look out of place on Shoreditch High Street.

For more of that East London vibe, push on to Möllevången, a slightly edgy corner of town that is in the early stages of Hoxton-ification. Its imminent transformation is most visible in Coffee Joint, from the trancey music to the homemade muffins in foil cases. All the pioneering local creatives gather here to show off their lime socks and sip spiced lattes, while in the market outside the Balkan stallholders slice watermelon into huge pink wedges. Möllan, as it is known for short, is the part of town that earned Malmö the nickname Falafel City: it's exotic, multicultural and full of cheap eats. Every Malmoite has their favourite falafel outlet, but down here in Möllan you can also go Chinese, Iranian, Lebanese and Turkish.

Most of the more sophisticated dining is back in the old town, at chic and confident restaurants such as **Bastard** (yes indeed), the new **Kockeriet** (great for lunch, which the Swedes take at noon) and **Atmosfär** (sophisticated Swedish food in a modern Gallic guise). There are two notable exceptions to the old-city rule. One is **Bloom In the Park**, which occupies a beautiful spot on the edge of a lake in Pildammsparken. There is



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From left: a cyclist on cobbled Engelbrektsgatan in the old town; Norrgavel furniture shop; the café at Moderna Museet, a contemporary-art museum

➤ no menu – every dish depends on the daily whim and boundless imagination of head chef Titti Qvarnström. Her as-the-spirit-moves-me concept may sound flaky, but those Michelin men thought it solid enough to give her restaurant a star. The other place worth the walk (or bike ride) from the old town is **Salt & Brygga**, a seafood restaurant on the waterfront in the middle of the exciting new Västra Hamnen, or Western Harbour district. The restaurant's frontage commands a

view of that excellent bridge, arching towards the Danish coast like a long, static Loch Ness monster. A short way behind is the Turning Torso, a soaring helix of a skyscraper that is the tallest in Scandinavia and also, in effect, a 21st-century Eiffel Tower. It's an unmistakable building that can be seen from every corner of the city and has become its architectural logo.

The best view of the tower's barleysugar enormousness is from the **Skybar**  of the just-opened Clarion hotel. The swish, instantly popular drinking den on the 25th floor is a spectacular spot for a sundowner, or for an aperitif before a gig in the Konserthus downstairs. Like so many other places in this happening town, it poses a quietly Swedish question. Why on earth have you never come to this side of the bridge before?

Jonathan stayed at Mäster Johan Hotel (www.masterjohan.com), which has doubles from about £90

#### **THE INSIDETRACK**



#### Ebbe Vollmer, chef at the Michelin-starred restaurant Vollmers

'Malmö is my home town. I've been running

restaurants here for 15 years. Over that time, the thing that's changed most is that you can eat better for less (as in many towns around the world). Lilla Torg is great for a drink, but to get really good food you have to get into the sidestreets. My place is a short distance from the square, as are our

two other restaurants, the bistro **Snapphane** and our steakhouse **SOT**.

I'm not often off-duty, but when I am I like to go to **Katrinetorp**, a manor house just outside the centre of Malmö. It's brilliant and very Swedish: great pastries, shrimp sandwiches and belly of pork done the Skåne way: salted, thick-sliced, pan-fried until it's really crispy and served with onion gravy and boiled potatoes. I take my kids there.

We also like to go to **Ostarps**, which is my uncle's restaurant a few miles outside town. When you try his amazing herring, you understand why the recipe

hasn't changed in three generations. And if you want to eat a smörgåsbord done the proper way, that's where you should be.

The Western Harbour is a beautiful part of Malmö. A new restaurant has just opened there next to the Green Matmarknad: it's called **Bon Ici**. I haven't been yet, but I have read lots about it and I want to go. And **Kallis**, the sauna and bathhouse on Ribersborg beach, is a nice spot. If it's too cold for a dip in the seapool, I'd still be happy to go there for a cup of tea and a sandwich.' www.vollmers.nu

## THE KENSINGTON

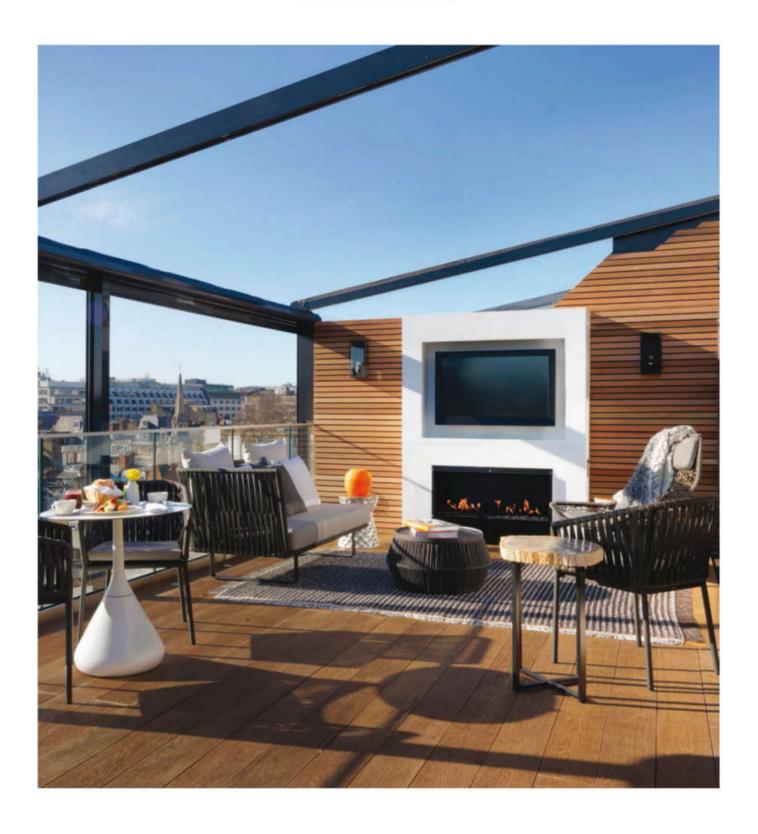
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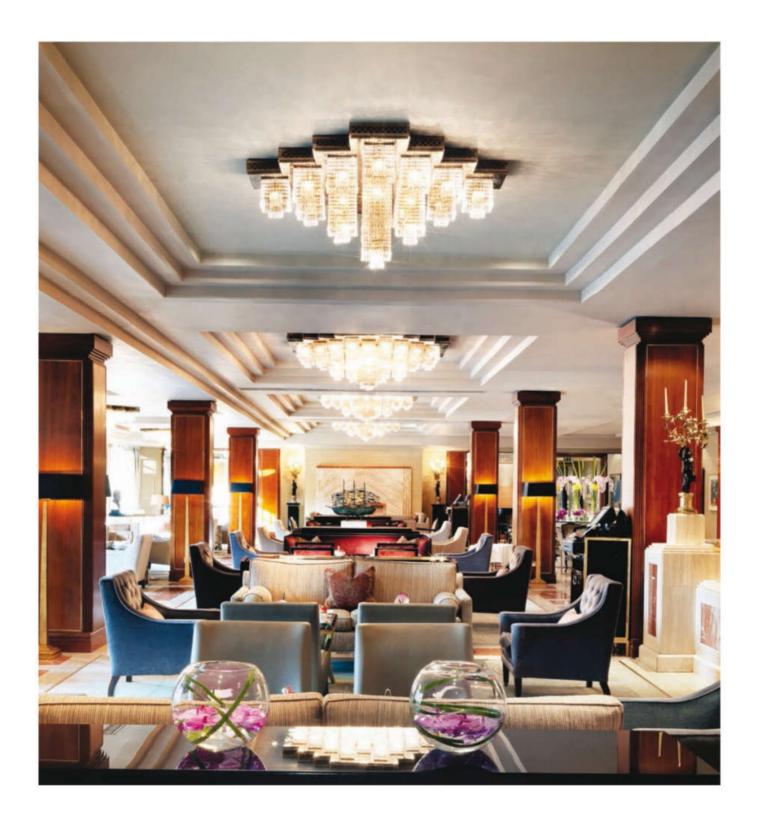
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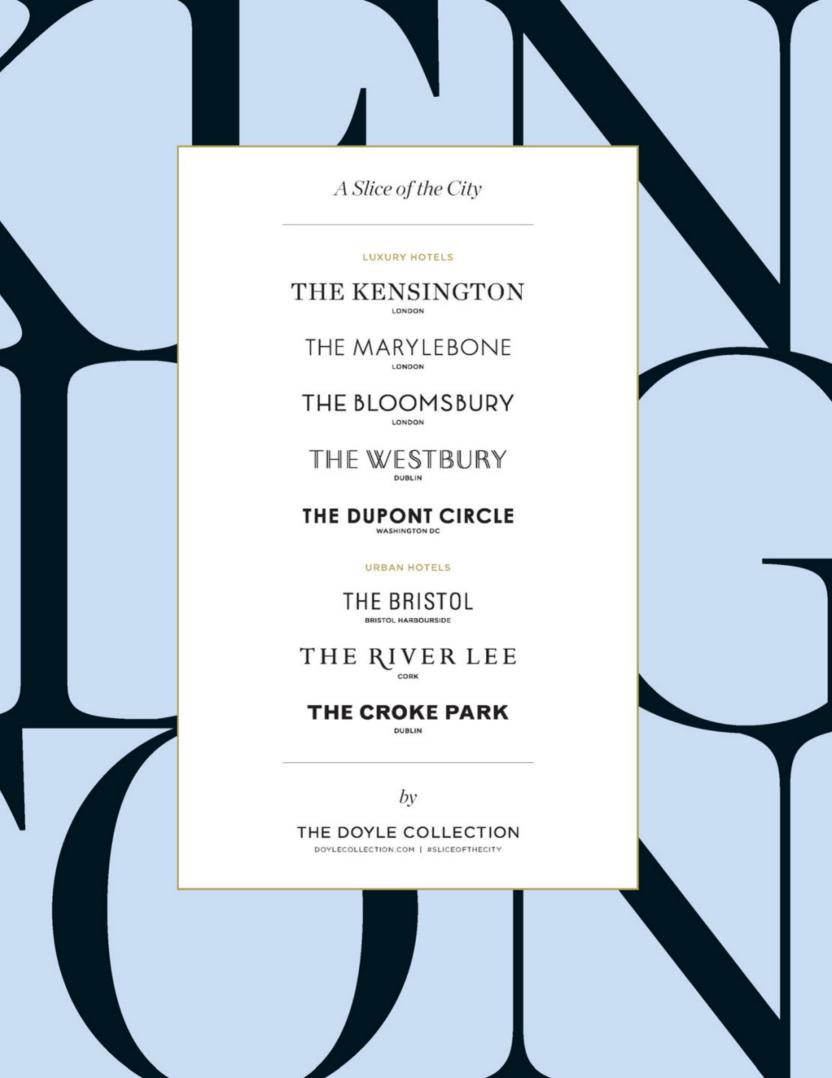
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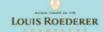
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# RAINBOWS

Forget severe monochromes and subdued palettes – designers are chasing the brilliance of the spectrum

Top row, from left: for the 2015 Serpentine
Pavilion in London, Spanish architects Selgas
Cano wove a psychedelic cocoon of plastic
webbing; tinted glass floods the Gethsemane
Church in Seattle with light; the Hesperia
Bilbao Hotel's cuboid windows recall a
Seventies disco; Tokyo-based French architect
Emmanuelle Moureaux has added colour to
the Sugamo Shinkin Bank with these poles
outside its Ekoda branch; the shutters of the
colonial police station that now houses
Singapore's Ministry of Information,
Communication and the Arts.

Middle row, from left: the panelled glass of the MUSAC modern art museum in León, Spain, was inspired by the windows of the city's 13th-century cathedral; a cheerful example of Moureaux's work for Sugamo Shinkin in Tokyo's Shimura district; the colour-loving designer also created the rainbow ribbons that dance in the wind in Shinjuku Central Park in Tokyo; each floor of the Pantone Hotel in Brussels uses a different palette; the eye-popping hues of the Saguaro Palm Springs extend to zingy yellow loungers, orange tables and pink towels.

Bottom row, from left: bright stacked cubes at another of Moureaux's banks in Nakaaoki; the Vietnamese practice A21 Studio won Building of the Year at the 2014 World Architecture Festival for The Chapel, a community space built of recycled materials in Ho Chi Minh City; at Sugamo Shinkin's Tokiwadai branch, recessed windows play tricks with perspective; mood lighting undulates from floor to ceiling at the Wunderbar in Montreal; the Rainbow Chapel wedding venue in Shanghai is decorated with more than 3,000 glass panels in 65 different shades. FIONA KERR



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MAGINE A PLACE WHERE all children, except one, never grow up. A fairy-tale land where you are free to recapture your inner Lost Boy, leave boring responsibilities at the gate with your car key, hop on a bicycle and pedal through a green and pleasant land to sleep in a log cabin.

This is no JM Barrie dream, this is Soho Farmhouse in Oxfordshire, a real Neverland and the latest – and without doubt greatest – creation from Soho House's own Peter Pan, Nick Jones.

Jones launched his empire 20 years ago when he turned the offices above Café Boheme into a club called Soho House, and has since opened 15 Houses across the world, as well as a fleet of Electric Cinemas, Cecconi's and Pizza East restaurants, and Cowshed Spas. All this from a lad with dyslexia, who left school at 16 to join the Trusthouse Forte training scheme; a man who circumnavigates the world at the speed of Superman, but always returns home to cook a mean Sunday roast; a chap whose dedication to Bottega Veneta woven trainers means he has a pair in every colour; a bloke who musters a cultish worship among his apostles similar to

bastardised country-house hotel with a whispering dining room and bits of food cowering beneath silver cloches.

Instead, there are 40 cosy cabins set along the banks of a stream. Yes, cabins. The very stuff of childhood dreams, Huckleberry adventures and Instagram accounts (check out @cabinporn). Wooden, blackened or corrugated iron, they vary from studio-size to three bedrooms, with interiors designed to Jones-ian perfection. But if you'd prefer bricks and mortar, there's also a three-bedroom cottage and seven-bedroom farmhouse, the latter the creation of Kirsty Young herself.

If you've never experienced Soho House design, here's the deal: from every angle the space looks beautiful; it's probably a darn sight more comfortable than your own home, and everything is exactly where you want it. Step out of the copper bathtub and the towel is right there. Reach into the chicken-wire-covered maxi-bar and your Negroni is ready-mixed. Slide open a dressing-table drawer and there's not only a hairdryer and straighteners but a cashmere-covered hot-water bottle and eye patches too.

# THE CABINS ARE THE VERY STUFF OF CHILDHOOD DREAMS, HUCKLEBERRY ADVENTURES AND INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

Adrian Zecha and his Aman group in the 1990s. Like Aman junkies, Jones' followers – let's call them Soho Hoes – plot their travels around stays at different Houses, ticking them off like a fancy shopping list.

The newest House is just 90 minutes from London in a 100-acre valley set in the sprawling, 4,000-acre Cotswold estate of Great Tew, owned by blue-eyed landowner Nick Johnston. It's just a 10-minute drive from Chipping Norton and a hop from the village Jones and his broadcaster wife Kirsty Young have made their home. 'There are thousands of people who live around here who want something like this,' he says. 'Membership's gone like a rocket.'

Jones and Johnston were introduced four years back and hatched the plan together. Construction began just 15 months ago. The result is unlike any other country hideaway in Britain. Forget renting a random cottage, or shacking up in a pub with paper-thin walls, or a

Clockwise from top left: the interior of a cabin; a view of the yard; the sitting room in the farmhouse; cakes in the deli; a bath outside a cabin; the deli. Previous page, the farmhouse

As my boyfriend declared, 'I judge a hotel room on how much stuff I want to nick... well, in this case, it's the lot.' To my relief, no thievery was required as everything can be bought from the Soho Home shop.

At the heart of Soho Farmhouse are a collection of pre-existing barns and stone buildings filled with enough recognisable Soho House riffs to cosset urban visitors: a mill-room pub, a Cowshed Spa where mani/pedis are carried out in wingback chairs, and a Josh Wood Atelier hairdressing salon. Then there's the fun and games: an indoor-outdoor pool floating on a lake: a hot-tub island with an ice room; an Electric Barn cinema showing current releases; jolly boating across the lake; tennis courts; a kitchen garden and cookery school; reconditioned milk floats to take you on a picnic or serve a cocktail at your cabin; a five-a-side football pitch with a dugout for spectators. Oh, and the seats are leather and stamped Soho Farmhouse. Detail thy name is Jones.

Aside from all the Disney magic, the real genius of this place is that – despite







being rural-lite and palatable for mud-phobics – the careful planning and design are authentic to an original farmstead, so the stables, chickens and grazing sheep are right in the thick of it. Jones knows it's the smells and (contained) muck of farmyard life that give this new concept its down-home, honest feel.

The arrival of Soho Farmhouse is a big deal for Oxfordshire. My boyfriend and I have a cottage in the nearby Evenlode Valley and for the past year the gossip here has consisted of little else other than who's been accepted or rejected as a member. The famously strict Soho House entry rules – creatives only, bankers are banned – are controlled by membership director Tom Russell, and here he was assisted by local ingénue Rose van Cutsem. 'The term creative has obviously translated a bit differently here to the Shoreditch or LA crowd,' she says. 'For

us, the litmus test was: if you're at the bar and turn to your left, is that person interesting/bonkers/creative? We now have a solid founder membership of Oxford professors, actors, the odd rock star, cheese makers, garden designers, loads of foodies, booksellers and entrepreneurs. It's eclectic, but that's Soho House.'

This I know. My first Soho House experience was in New York, when I found myself beside Uma Thurman, our jeans rolled up, using the massive bath in the bedroom as a paddling pool. This was swiftly followed by a hen party at Babington House in Somerset, where staff turned a blind eye to giggling girls doing cartwheels across the lawn in showgirl costumes and mixed life-saver Bloody Marys the next morning.

Of course, the Soho Farmhouse opening party and sleepover weekend was a blast. Jones is good at parties; he

makes rock stars feel normal and normal people feel like rock stars. For the event he gathered both Lost Boys – Douglas Booth, Luke Evans, Richard Bacon, Eddie Redmayne – and Tinkerbells – Alexa Chung, Liv Tyler, Daisy Lowe, Pixie Geldof, Cressida Bonas – all of whom jigged to Paolo Nutini's live set. The stars beneath the stars.

The next morning, Jones gazed contentedly across the pool where actor Tom Hollander was doing laps. 'I told Kirsty this is my mid-life crisis,' he chuckled. But this is no crisis. For a man who makes other people's puckish pleasure his business, this is Jones' triumph.

SOHO FARMHOUSE (+44 160 869 1000; WWW.SOHOFARMHOUSE. COM). CABINS COST FROM £250 FOR MEMBERS. NON MEMBERS CAN STAY FROM £330



#### **BED-HOPPING WITH ROMOLA GARAI**

The star of *Atonement* who'll next be seen on the big screen with Meryl Streep talks to **Francesca Babb** 

LALUNA, GRENADA

'I've only been to the Caribbean a couple of times. Once was for work so it wasn't very exciting, but then I came here on holiday and it's really freaking good. The rooms are a bit smaller than a villa, but bigger than a hut. Food is a huge thing for me, and it's beautiful here. It's owned by an Italian guy so the menu is Italian but with a Grenadan slant.' www. laluna.com. Doubles from £288



#### THE LUGGER, CORNWALL

'We went on holiday to Cornwall a lot when I was a kid, and more recently I've been to The Scarlet, which is amazing, but we stayed here when we went down for a friend's wedding and it's lovely: in a very romantic setting with great food - Cornish fish cooked unbelievably well.' www.thelugger. co.uk. Doubles from £85





'IF YOU'RE

**EXPERIENCE'** 



#### CASA OLEA, **ANDALUCIA**

'I was looking for an eco hotel and this one is very big on sustainability. It's run by an English couple who bought it as a derelict farmhouse. It's very small but is exquisite and the food is out of this world. It's in a very remote area, with acres of wild flowers, olive farms and ancient hilltop villages. If someone ever tells me they're looking for a honeymoon destination, I tell them to go here.' www.casaolea.com. Doubles from £82



#### THE ROOKERY, LONDON

'This is in a Georgian house in Clerkenwell, decked out with beautiful antiques. I always think if you're visiting London from Europe or the States, you should get a proper Dickens experience. I get very lonely when I am travelling for work and often end up staying in big chain hotels - even if they're really nice, I always want to stay somewhere a bit more personal, like here.' www.rookeryhotel.com. Doubles from £294

Romola Garai stars in 'Measure For Measure' at London's Young Vic (2 October-7 November), and in 'Suffragette', on general release 23 October

#### **AZUR, CIRALI, TURKEY**

'A really great, good-value hotel. Although a lot of this stretch of coast has been ruined by overdevelopment, this spot is still very beautiful. We get a little boat and hop around, stopping off at private beaches for picnics. The hotel is family run, and while amazing for children, with a beautiful playground, it's not a resort. It also has the nicest garden of any hotel I've ever been to. We sat under the trees eating bread and honey.' www.azurhotelcirali.com. Doubles from £54

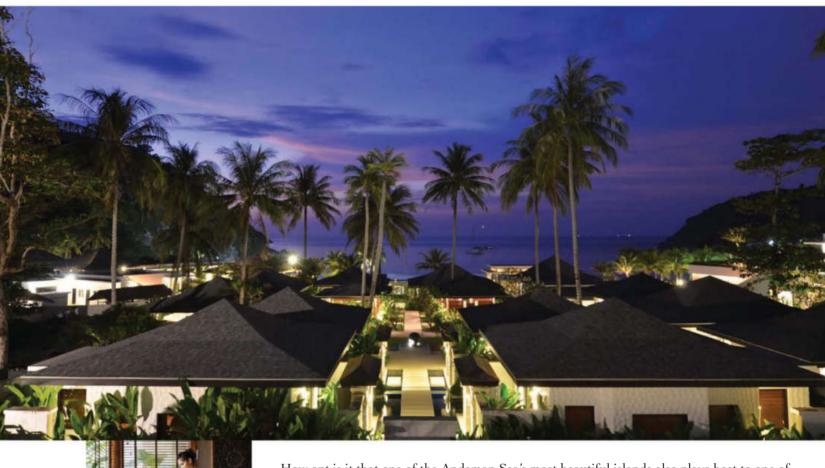


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#### WHERE TO STAY

➤ I flirted at my peril, with other postcodes

— I have stayed loyal. But the moment
my neighbourhood was branded 'London's
Fashionable Notting Hill', I rebelled.

For me, growing up in the 1970s, Notting Hill was never fashionable. It was hip, maybe. Cool, probably. Edgy, for sure: the omnipresent bobbies on our beat were testament to that. It was a time when the clothes sold on Portobello Road Market were second-hand, not vintage. When there was only one restaurant, L'Artiste Assoiffé, more notable for its caged parrots than its soupe du jour. When all you could buy on All Saints Road was resin, not a five-course tasting menu; when your parents would let you roam solo, aged nine, round the Carnival; when your local pub held a Topless Go-Go Night and didn't serve pulled pork with a celeriac remoulade.

Fast-forward a decade and how things changed. First came the arrival of 192, not just a restaurant but more of an institution for models, actors, writers, film directors to prop up the bar each and every night. As its founder Tchaik Chassay says, 'It was a drop-in. You came to talk, to drink, to flirt.' By closing time, under-fed but over-inebriated, you'd head to the Globe, a hole-in-the-wall nightclub of sorts, for beer and backgammon on sticky tables. Hangovers would be cured by bacon sandwiches at the local caff or warm, milky coffee on the Golborne Road.

Notting Hill was coming of age but it was still a village, a community. By the





millennium, all that changed. The Carnival got all techno, too loud and too popular, losing its original laid-back rhythm. Well-heeled Americans and French bankers – no doubt enamoured by Richard Curtis's glossy cinematic ode to the neighbourhood and tired of the tedium of South Kensington – moved in, pushing property prices up and the locals out.

# THERE WAS A TIME WHEN YOUR LOCAL HAD A TOPLESS GO-GO NIGHT AND DIDN'T SERVE PULLED PORK

Designer boutiques bulldozed their way through anything useful – the petrol station, the newsagent, the post office, the cheap cafés, the chip shops and the Chinese 'all you can eat' restaurant. And then 192 closed its doors forever, to be replaced by yet another pizzeria chain. Notting Hill, as it had been, seemed to have died.

So to hear that a new hotel wanted to breathe life back into the area was a song for my heart. The Laslett, set across five Victorian mansions next to Notting Hill tube, is so committed to the spirit of the neighbourhood it even takes its name from the community activist and organiser of the original Notting Hill Carnival, Rhuane Laslett. It is the creation of Tracy Lowy, who is not just a brilliant hotelier but someone who spent her youth 'stomping round this patch'. Working with the award-winning architect Tom Bartlett of Waldo Works, an old friend who also

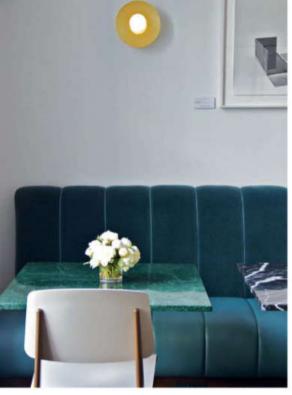




grew up in this part of town, the pair decided to present the area with not just a hotel but a hangout where locals could wile away their time and money.

From the moment I walked into the hotel, I felt I was back in old Notting Hill. Contemporary art by Toby Mott, Barbara Hulanicki and Jerome Dodd and

Both public spaces and private rooms at the Laslett reflect the area's history, with bric-a-brac from Portobello Road and works by artists such as Barbara Hulanicki (top)







photographs by Barry Kamen hang on the walls. Antiques and textiles from Portobello Market and Golborne Road fill the 51 pale-grey rooms.

The food is by Sally Clarke. Her restaurant, just a stone's throw from the hotel, is a local institution, not only for its pastries and seasonal cooking but also because it was here that Lucian Freud breakfasted, lunched and sometimes even dined. I can see why. My supper of tomato risotto, English charcuterie and a baked potato filled with caviar (Lowy

calls this bar food) was sensational. But then Lowy is not a girl to do anything by halves. There are full-sized Neal's Yard potions in the bathrooms and floor-to-ceiling bars in the bedrooms, stuffed with litre bottles of spirits, wines, Champagnes and hangover remedies (reassuringly Notting Hill).

When Lowy held a party one warm evening in July this year, Bella Freud, Alice Temperley, jewellery designer Solange Azagury and vintage guru Virginia Bates were just some of the W11 residents who joined the throng to sip a Notting Hill Summer Collins mixed by barman Frederik Ollsen.

'My girlfriends and I arrived nostalgic for 192 and those much missed haunts round my beloved Portobello,' said the model Laura Bailey. 'We left fantasising about cocktails and sleepovers.'

THE LASLETT, 8 PEMBRIDGE GARDENS, LONDON (+44 20 3474 4140; WWW.THELASLETT. CO.UK). DOUBLES FROM £235









#### THE WEEKENDER

#### THE ST MAWES HOTEL CORNWALL

WHAT IS IT? A brand-new, affordable little hotel in a prime spot in the fishing village of St Mawes. Its sister hotel, The Idle Rocks, was for some time the only rival to Olga Polizzi's nearby Tresanton, which put this pretty stretch of coast on the map back in 1998. Now it's time for the Rocks' chilled-out sibling to make her mark. Locals treat the place as a village pub, propping up the harbour walls with pints of craft ale. On Saturdays, guitarists play indie-rock to an up-for-it, multi-generational crowd of villagers and visitors. This is the playful place to stay: cast all pretensions aside and join in the fun.

BEHIND THE SCENES The owners, former Aston Martin chairman David Richards and his interior-designer wife Karen, wanted their second hotel in the village to be priced for everyone. Karen has given it a fresh summer beach-house look with a lived-in feel (wet bums on ikat-print chairs; newspapers to read in front of the open

fire on chilly evenings). There are plans to open a small cinema at some point. The Richards are very much around and about, stopping to chat to friends as they ride their bikes between their two hotels and private home on the quay.

less than at The Idle Rocks, it doesn't show: all are simple, seasidey, breezy and spare, with abstract paintings by Cornish artists such as David Pearce and Lynn Golden, sold at The Square Gallery in the village among others. Book one of the three sea-view rooms: there's nothing quite so lulling as listening to the sound of waves crashing onto a rocky beach from your own bed.

EAT The Idle Rocks is for spoiling suppers, but here it's all about honest, simple fare served in the bar. The chalkboard menu changes from lunch to dinner, and could include generous sharing plates of fat fingers of sole, sardines on toast or fantastically good

stone-baked pizzas. Daily specials rely on the weather as well as the catch of the day: if it's a damp, cool day in autumn, the chef will chalk up dishes such as roast mackerel with a warming chorizo and chickpea stew. Heaven.

WHO GOES THERE Yachtie families with perfectly tousled hair and rosy cheeks in town for a boat race or show. Take note of their matching navy shorts, Jack Wills jerseys and deck shoes. If you wear anything else, you may feel a bit like you're swimming in the wrong shoal.

WE LIKE The genuine and attentive staff – mostly sweet twentysomethings – happily listening to guests' tales of kayaking around the peninsula as though it's never been done before.

WE DON'T LIKE While the upstairs sitting room and terrace where breakfast is served is lovely, the main event is limited to fresh fruit, cheeses, ham and pastries. You can always (and probably should) stroll up to The Idle Rocks for the full works of green juices, kippers and pancakes. Which is great if it's a sunny day; not so great if it's raining.

CONTACT www.stmaweshotel.com.

Doubles from £185 HAZEL LUBBOCK



#### WHILE YOU'RE HERE

Follow the coastal path up to the village of **St Just**, with its semi-tropical gardens and gorgeous church, then refuel with a cream tea at **Miss V's Vintage Tea**, above, on the parish grounds. A short ferry ride away, Falmouth is a happening little place where most of the action is on the water (sailing, fishing, kayaking). The current craze is stand-up paddle-boarding: a two-hour loop takes you round to **St Anthony Head** or along to King Henry VIII's **St Mawes Castle**.







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WIDEN YOUR W O R L D

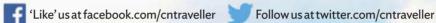






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#### STYLE FILE

#### **BEST FOR NEW LABELS ALESSANDRA PETERSEN**

The geometric new A/W line by Petersen, displayed at her 1920s colonial-house boutique, celebrates graphic Amazonian tribal patterns and Bauhaus tapestries through traditional weaving techniques and natural fibres. Loveliest of all are the capes worked in feathers and long, silk-fringe necklaces, great for dressing up a plain T-shirt or dress. Atahualpa 479, Miraflores (+51 1 242 5378)

**ESCUDO** Central Saint Martins graduate Chiara Macchiavello and her sister Giuliana take inspiration from Peru's landscapes and people to build a brand 'devoted to design, committed to heritage'. Giuliana develops hand-made prima cotton and baby alpaca fabric swatches at Escudo's visit-by-appointment showroom; Andean weavers incorporate her designs into bolts of fabric for long-line tailored coats and ponchos. Since launching Escudo in 2013, the sisters have shown their collections during Copenhagen and Miami fashion weeks; this year the label won Lima Fashion Week's Barrington Prize for tailoring. Juan Fanning 108, Barranco  $(+51\ 1\ 256\ 7504)$ 

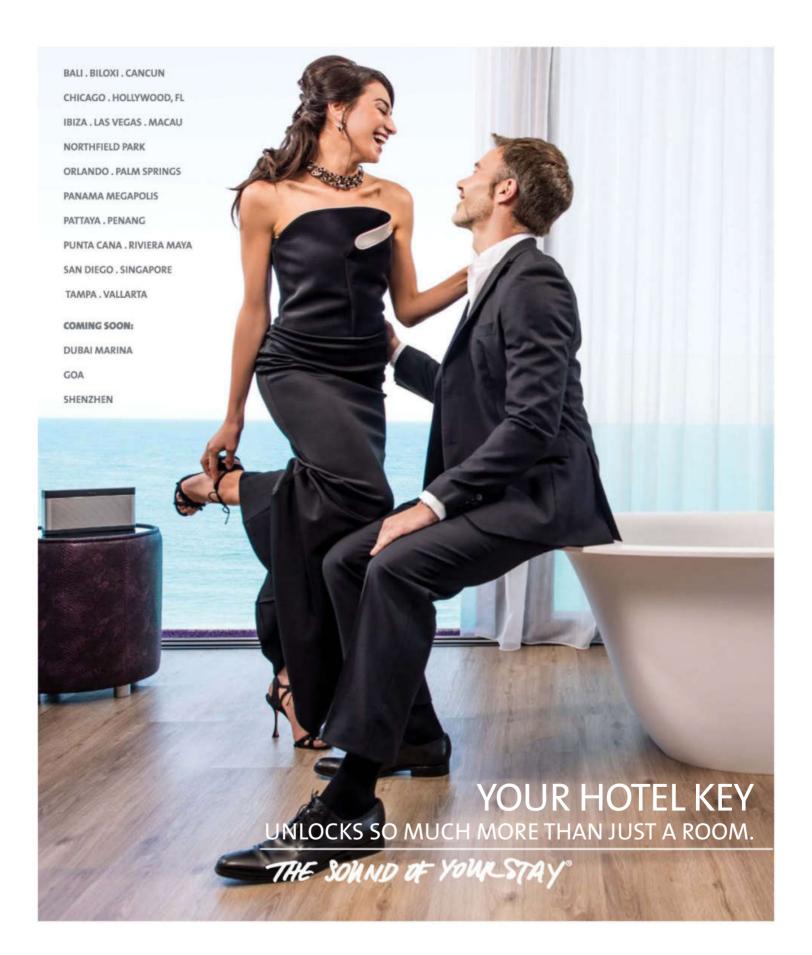
LAMA Nature, art, the mystical and the mechanical inform architect Neil Gayoso's unique graphic-print T-shirts, jackets, hoodies and dresses, cut in the label's own line of organic Lima cotton by fashion designer Sara Vilchez. You can also pick up fine leather shoes and bags and stationery at this minimalist boutique. Jr Gonzales Prada 381, Miraflores (+51 1 445 0114)

AYNI Taking its name from the Quechua phrase and cultural nuance meaning 'today is for you, tomorrow is for me', Ayni produces edgy knitwear in baby alpaca and vicuña. Juanita (Juana Borga), the only Peruvian model to walk in New York, is the brand ambassador for the latest season; Ayni's oversized



Dedalo. Previous page, offbeat art at Lama











Clockwise from left: the roof terrace at Hotel B in Barranco; a 1920s-era staircase at the hotel; homeware at Primas design store in Miraflores; a display at the shop





deep-pile coats, sweaters with woven leather panels and softer-thansoft jumper dresses, sold at the apartmentbuilding studio, keep the chill of the city's autumn fog at bay. Room 204, Jr Gonzales Prada 355, Miraflores (+51 1 241 4539)

LORENA PESTANA After spending a long time learning tribal jewellery techniques in the Amazon city of Santa Maria de Neva, Pestana first began crafting pieces inspired by sea anemone, floral motifs and pre-Columbian cultures in 2002. Her most recent collection, with delicate, Inca-style geometric pendants and necklaces, starburst and pyramid stud earrings and chunky bangles in gold and silver, is a refined take on festival chic. *General Borgoño* 770, *Miraflores* (+51 1 446 4033)

#### **BEST FOR CULTURE**

MATE Celebrated Peruvian photographer Mario Testino's close relationships with Kate Moss, Madonna and Princess Diana are documented over five galleries at this beautifully restored mansion. The white floor-length gown worn by Diana during the relaxed photo shoot with Testino two months prior to her death in 1997 is also on display. The shop does a roaring trade in the photographer's prints and books. *Pedro de Osma 409, Barranco (+51 1 251 7755)* 

#### BEST FOR A ONE-STOP HIT

**DEDALO** Set within an open-plan colonial house in the artsy enclave of Barranco, rooms around a central exhibition space are rented by independent fashion, homeware and interior designers and store owners. Printed cushions of bow-tiewearing pugs sit alongside hand-knitted collars. Look out for the leather and ethnic fabric bags and camera straps by Siblings Army. *Paseo Sáenz Peña 295*, *Barranco* (+51 1 652 5400)

#### **BEST FOR INTERIORS**

PLANTIQUE Landscapers Diana Arce and Mariana Letts started this shop to demonstrate innovative ways to bring splashes of greenery into modern homes. The duo sell 'mossies' – plants cocooned in moss that can be suspended from any ceiling – porous concrete pots, wall and hanging planters packed with succulents and tropical flowers, as well as terrariums, hand-crocheted cacti and botany-inspired jewellery. *Pedro de Osma 106, Barranco* (+51 1 477 4065)

PUNA This began as a Peruvian art and design boutique in the highland city of Cusco. Its second outlet, which shares an old Barranco house with Plantique, sells Scandinavian, mid-century-modern and pre-Columbian-style furniture and light fixtures by the owner-designers, alongside utilitarian and decorative

pieces by local artists, cassettes and vinyl records, kaleidoscopic ceramics, books and magazines. *Pedro de Osma 106, Barranco (+51 1 477 4065)* 

PRIMAS Cousins Augusta Pastor and Macarena Belaunde unite their respective passions for Nordic design and antiquities in this concept store in a Miraflores adobe ranch house. Browse through curiosities including deer-antler chandeliers, Tolix Marais chairs with velvet ikat cushions and Cameroon Juju hats, or kick back with a cup of Peruvian coffee on the terrace. As the owners like to keep the experience low-key, Primas' address is only supplied on request via the website. +51 1 678 4410; www.primas.com.pe

#### BEST FOR STAYING OVER

HOTEL B Behind the ornate façade of this lovely 1920s wedding-cake villa is an incredibly chic restaurant and high-ceilinged bedrooms packed with vintage furniture and serious pieces of art. Visit the bar on a Friday night and it's standing room only. If you can, book Room 224, which has French windows that open on to a balcony overlooking tree-lined Calle San Martin. You can smell the sea breeze from the bed. Sáenz Peña 204, Barranco (+51 1 206 0800; www.hotelb.pe). Doubles from about £350



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#### STYLE FILE





# 92 Condé Nast Traveller October 2015

# LOCAL KNOW-HOW

#### Micaela Llosa

FASHION DESIGNER AND OWNER OF PHILOMENA BOUTIQUE

'I love Meche Correa because she was one of the first designers to incorporate Peruvian tradition into her work, demonstrating techniques in high fashion and haute couture – in fact, she made my wedding dress. Jessica Butrich is the opposite; her style is very feminine and she's popular with women who want a classic look with some edge: animal prints mixed with reds or pinks. For inspiration I like the Larco Museum, which is full of ancestral pieces and examples of archaic techniques. There's also a lovely restaurant for lunch. And the Amano Museum has a great collection of ancient textiles. El Pan de la Chola is one of the most popular spots in Lima for meetings and to hang out. The coffee is good and the sandwiches are delicious. I like to cycle there for a carrot-and-orange juice in the morning. My friend Sabrina's little place La Gastrónoma is another favourite. All the wines are organic, it has a cute terrace and it serves small snacks of houmous, burrata and fresh tomatoes.' www.philomena.pe

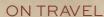
PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAGEBRIEF.COM; JESSICA SAMPLE/IMAGEBRIEF.COM; MARCO SIMOLA/IMAGEBRIEF



#### I PRESENT TO YOU...

## ASTIER DE VILLATTE

The eccentric Parisian interiors duo on ramshackled grandeur and misshapen designs



'When in France, we enjoy walking along the Atlantic coast, particularly in Brittany. The islands near Quiberon (Hoëdic and Houat) are natural and wild. We also love the old-fashioned charm of the Côte d'Azur between Nice and Menton, and its proximity to the mountains and the sea. And in Japan we have a real predilection for Nara Hotel in the small town of Nara, south of Kyoto. It's said that Japanese Buddhism was born here and the hotel has hardly changed since it was built in 1909. Deer stroll freely through the great park and sometimes in the middle of the city itself. It would make the perfect setting for an Agatha Christie novel.'



#### ON RESTAURANTS

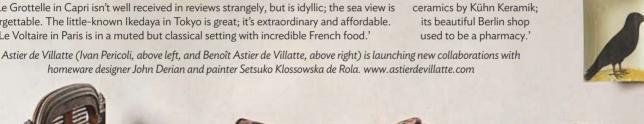
'We both spent our childhoods between Rome and Paris. We used to play in the gardens of Villa Medici in Rome; it's a theatrical and magical place. Just in front of it is Ciampini and its terrace overlooks the rooftops of Rome. It has managed to retain something of the dolce vita. Le Grottelle in Capri isn't well received in reviews strangely, but is idyllic; the sea view is unforgettable. The little-known Ikedaya in Tokyo is great; it's extraordinary and affordable. Le Voltaire in Paris is in a muted but classical setting with incredible French food.'

ON DESIGN

'We enjoy strolling in old, run-down cities, although they don't exist so much in Europe anymore. Towns today have been caught up in the frenzy of excessive restoration, which makes them feel sterile. It's why we like simple, antique objects with imperfections. We adore Steve Harrison's pieces: he's endlessly trying to create the perfect teacup. His work can be found in the beautiful Arts & Science boutiques in Tokyo. We have a weakness for the elegant and amusing its beautiful Berlin shop used to be a pharmacy.'

#### ON SHOPPING

'Flea markets are wonderful. They are open-air mines bursting with infinite treasures. We used to spend our weekends scouring the Antiques Garage in New York before it closed last year. In Paris, the flea markets at Porte de Clignancourt and Puces de la Porte de Vanves are some of the best. Italy's markets are generally brilliant, but the most beautiful is Rialto in Venice: the fruit and vegetable stalls are works of art.'







#### Detroit: the exhibition

Conceived by Lisa Waud, the Flower House project will see botanical experts fill the interior walls and ceilings of a 16-room abandoned house in Detroit with American-grown fresh blooms and living plants. On show for a very short time, the house will then be carefully taken down and regenerated as a flower farm for the local community. Runs 16-18 October. www.theflower.house

### CULTIVATED LIVING

From delicate blooms to exotic species of cacti, plant life is thriving in every corner of the world – including your wardrobe



# Ma

#### Madrid: the fashion collection

Creative director of Delpozo Josep Font directed his A/W 15 collection at an audience who intend to spend very little time in the cold. Petal heads, wild-flower prints and crystal appliqués atop layers of chiffon were presented in rich garden hues destined for tropical climes. The collection is unmistakably one of the biggest hits of the season. The flagship stores are based in sunny Miami and in the label's home city of Madrid. www.delpozo.com

#### Los Angeles: the shop

Bringing the desert inside, Johnny Morera sources rare cacti from the border of Mexico and California to sell in Cactus Store, his prickly downtown shop, which opened earlier this year and is already going down well with the LA film crowd. Names to know are the best-selling spiral and spiky variety cereus forbesii spiralis and the purple disc-like opuntia macrocentra. 'Just don't ask for peyote,' says Morera. www.hotcactus.la







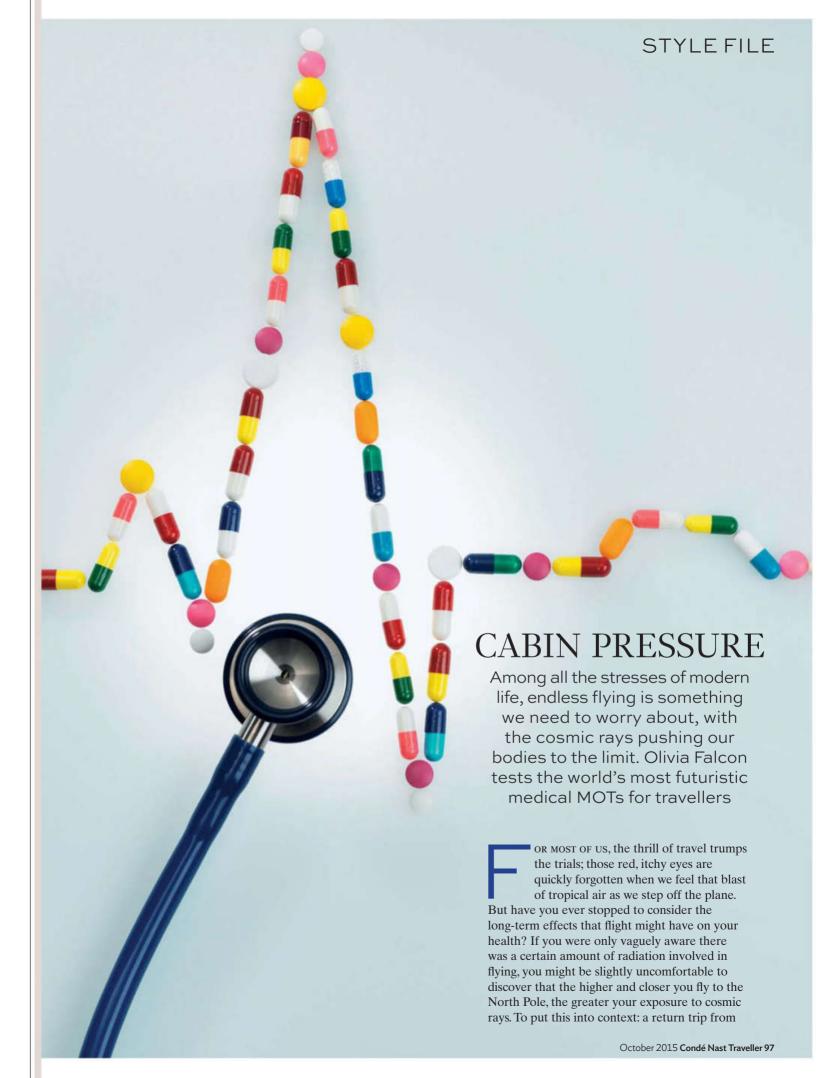








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#### STYLE FILE

➤ London to Beijing easily exceeds the 100-microsievert dose from a chest X-ray. While not a problem for most travellers, it's definitely something frequent flyers should be aware of. And you might also think twice about the window seat if you knew there was a greater risk from UVA rays, which age skin and cause premature wrinkling.

Throw in a cabin humidity level of about 10 per cent compared to the 50 our bodies need, airplane food loaded with sugar and salt to compensate for the fact altitude dulls our sense of taste, and a few glasses of wine to steady your nerves, and you're heading towards Gobi Desert levels of dehydration – which raises blood pressure, increases the risk of DVT and clots, and causes problems for those with respiratory conditions such as asthma.

hanks to low-cost airlines and globalisation, we're all jetsetters now, and a new type of wellness service is on the rise to counteract the corrosive effects of our adrenalin-charged lifestyles. Challenging old thinking that you only need to see a doctor when you're ill, these health concierge services want to meet you on an average day (you're probably feeling tired, bloated and irritable, but that's normal, right?) and then work their magic to supercharge your body into a shinier, healthier, more energetic version of itself.

Your medical history is, of course, very relevant, but it's your future health that gets these doctors stirred up. Employing cutting-edge tests to microanalyse your lifestyle and genetic predispositions, they'll give you a health strategy tailored to balance the fact that you Ping-Pong across the Atlantic on business trips every month or juggle a gaggle of children with a 24/7 career. Or both.

So who to see? If you're prepared to risk the cosmic rays and take a flight to South Korea, you can join a consortium of wealthy Russians, Chinese and a handful of clued-up Americans at the Chaum Centre (www.chaumlife.com) in Seoul. Part hospital, part spa, Chaum offers one of the world's most powerful health MOTs. The top-to-toe medicals, which include DNA blood screenings to check for genetic mutations and a host of investigations with the latest equipment, including MRIs and the newest CT scans (with the lowest dose of radiation, naturally), take five to six hours to complete. Compared to most American clinics,



where such tests might take five days in five different locations, this in itself is extraordinary. Treatments range from sleep therapy in a Dreamer's Capsule that triggers brain waves for the deepest, most refreshing slumber (a 30-minute nap in the pod is said to be as restorative as five hours' ordinary sleep), to intravenous drips that contain vitamins, antioxidants and a top-secret ingredient to help you retain more intravascular volume (a techie term for fluid) to counteract dehydration.

Chaum also has a stem-cell centre in Tokyo (South Korea prohibits such practices) that will harvest, culture and grow your white blood cells for reinjection into your body, which is claimed to boost the immune system. Starting at about £6,000 a pop, it's not cheap but, as Dr Richard Dawood, author of *Travellers' Health*, warns, 'You are up to seven times more likely to catch a

tests to heavy-metal detox programmes. It is also pioneering cognitive stimulation with a 3D-machine that monitors brain activity, and can prescribe exercises to strengthen neural pathways and protect against early signs of dementia. Sha is on a mission to lighten travellers' bloat too, with two new Esenza mini-spas at Madrid airport that offer posture-correcting shiatsu massage, energy-boosting reiki treatments and a selection of fresh, organic food boxes as an alternative to airplane food.

eading the charge in London is
Viavi (www.viavi.com) in Devonshire
Place, servicing high-flying clients
who often arrive feeling lethargic, with weak
immune systems and poor digestion. Viavi's
chief executive is Dr Sabine Donnai, a GP
and former regional clinical director of
Bupa. She says, 'These factors can fast-track
the ageing process and increase the propensity
to get diseases. People shouldn't have to
accept feeling tired or unwell as a result of a
busy lifestyle. At Viavi, we show them how
they can have it all without paying the price.'

Well, of course, there is a price to pay, and at £7,500 for a health evaluation, it's a pretty hefty one, but many clients, such as top chef Marcus Wareing, rhapsodise about the benefits and believe it's essential to improving the quality of a load-bearing life. Viavi also offers more streamlined anti-ageing and detox programmes from £3,000 to address specific concerns.

So what do you get for your money? If you're up for the full whack, a physician will take a comprehensive medical history and run cutting-edge tests to get a 360-degree view of your current health and where you're heading. The process starts at home, where clients may be asked to gather saliva and urine samples, which are used to measure stress and sex hormone

# YOU ARE SEVEN TIMES MORE LIKELY TO CATCH A COLD WITHIN A WEEK OF A TRIP THAN IF YOU HAD STAYED AT HOME

cold within a week of a trip than if you had stayed at home.' So the treatment will be music to the ears of a business person who spends much of their time on virus-riddled flights.

There are some impressive options closer to home too. On the Costa Blanca in Spain, Sha Wellness Clinic (www. shawellnessclinic.com) has a full range of genetic screenings and preventative treatments, from DAO enzyme migraine

levels, a good indication of how close you are to running out of steam. The hormone test involves spitting into a test tube at five-hour intervals, which is particularly challenging by torchlight at 3am, as turning on the lights wakes up the body and tampers with your melatonin reading. But all the pernickety precision reassures you this is a no-holds-barred medical that gets answers.

Most people are also asked to submit to a heart rate variability test. This means

Incredible India

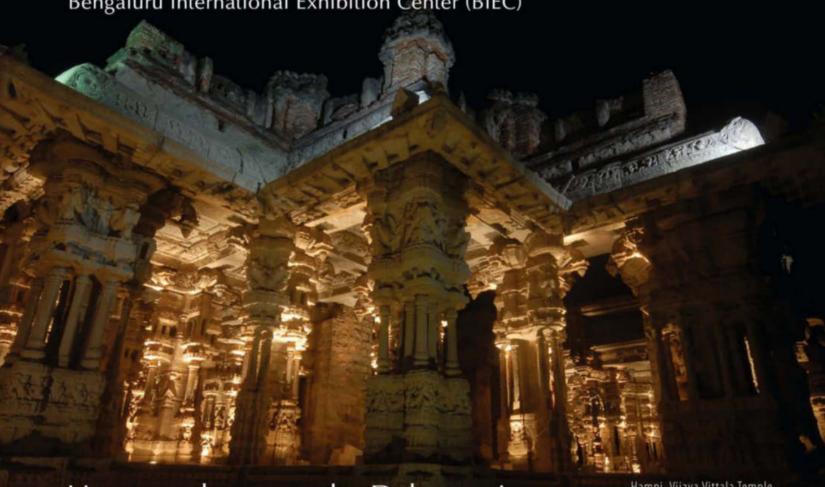






## Bengaluru is proud to host the 38th PATA Travel Mart 2015

Sept 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 at Bengaluru International Exhibition Center (BIEC)



Hearty welcome to the Delegates!

Hampi, Vijaya Vittala Temple UNESCO world heritage



Over 1000 delegates from across the globe-Exclusive insight into the tourism travel mart

wearing a small monitor under your clothes for three days, which takes real-time readings of your heartbeat and nervous system to gauge the balance between stress and rest fluctuations. The results, presented in an easy-to-understand graph, illustrate how simple lifestyle tweaks can have a huge effect. Every team put clients through their paces. Everyone has their body composition analysed on bioelectrical scales that use a painless current to check the ratio of muscle to fat. This often flags up what Donnai calls 'skinny fat syndrome': a situation where a person might be size zero or consider themself a 'normal'

# IF YOU NEVER FALL INTO THE DEEPER PARTS OF A 90-MINUTE SLEEP CYCLE, YOU'RE HEADED FOR TOTAL BURN-OUT

patient is asked to drink alcohol with dinner on one night and abstain for the next two. The results are shocking. Angry red spikes of a disrupted alcohol-induced sleep all through the night are compared to calm blue waves of deep rest cycles when you lay off the wine.

'People get very hung up about how many hours' sleep they get,' says Donnai, 'but they are missing the point. The purpose of sleep is energy recovery, memory consolidation and the release of hormones. This monitor measures the nervous system to show how well your body is recovering. It dispels the myth that a glass or two of red wine will help you drift off, as we can see clearly it's doing the opposite. If your body is never allowed to fall into the deeper parts of a 90-minute sleep cycle, you're setting yourself up for total burn-out.'

At-home tests completed, it's into Viavi's plush HQ where the medical

weight, but dieting or a sedentary lifestyle has led to muscle loss, leaving an unhealthy percentage of fat even though they appear thin. This test often spurs people into changing their exercise regime, and Viavi works with top personal trainer Harry Jameson to review the data and create incredibly precise workouts.

ameson's regimes are fine-tuned by a cardio-pulmonary exercise test to measure cardio-vascular fitness. This involves donning a rubber facemask and pedalling hell for leather on an exercise bike. The mask allows the team to record intake of oxygen versus output of carbon dioxide, which not only shows how well the heart and lungs are functioning but gives precise readings on how hard the person needs to work to use up fat (to keep them fit) rather than burning sugar (which makes you feel

stiff). This test is often repeated a few months later to prove how effective the training regime has been.

'Typically, my clients are successful forty-somethings who want their bodies to perform as well as their businesses,' says Jameson. 'When it comes to leisure, rather than the fly-and-flop holidays of old, the alpha gang wants an adventure, be it hiking the Inca Trail or heli-skiing in Alaska. The kind of thorough testing that Viavi carries out lets them burn the candle at both ends in the safest possible way.' To prepare people for extreme physical challenges at altitude, they offer training and assessments at the hypoxic chamber in the Ham Yard Hotel in London, 'We can simulate low-oxygen environments with a mask or give them an oxygen tent they can sleep in at home for the most targeted training,' he adds.

'This type of precision medicine is the future,' says Donnai. 'It's about giving people a strategy.' Test results are fed back in a PowerPoint presentation with colour-coded scores: green (nothing to worry about), amber (let's keep an eye on it) and red (immediate action). 'We flag up a priority list so you can see the most pressing change you need to make to your busy schedule; the one that's going to make a major difference to you. At the end of the day, we want our clients to enjoy their lives, but we give them a more in-depth understanding of their bodies and their trigger points so they can avoid the crash and burn.'

#### THE POWER OF PICK-ME-UPS

Six hard-working products to bring balance and wellbeing to the depleted traveller



Magnesium works to relax the body and get rid of tension. Ideal for soothing cricked joints and helping you slumber like a bear. Better You Magnesium Oil Soak, £35



These rebalancing salts contain ionic minerals that correct fluid imbalances and take away that 'greige' skin tone. Rejuvenated H30 Hydration, £25



Packed with vitamins and electrolytes, and great for tiredness or jet lag – a far healthier energy boost than a Coke and a fry-up. Faust's Recovery Pack, £5.50



A super shot of vitamin B5, 'the happy pill', which supports the adrenal system and regulates energy levels.

Strong Chill Pill, £22.50

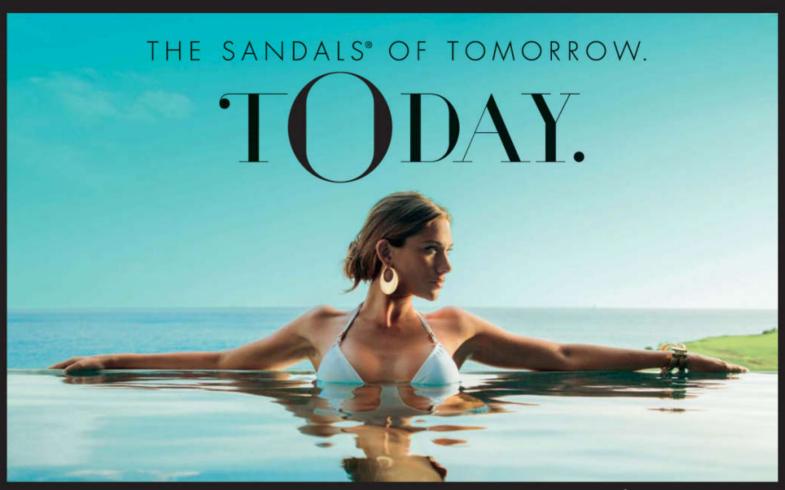


Activates telomase enzymes to turn back the biological clock and make cells act younger – the best 50th birthday present you could give. TA65, £400



This blend of roots, herbs and cordyceps mushrooms helps oxygenate the blood, boost immunity and balance hormones.

Living Nutrition
Warrior, £29.99



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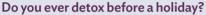
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 0800 742 742 OR VISIT SANDALS.CO.UK OR SEE YOUR LOCAL TRAVEL AGENT

### How do you stay in shape?

'I like running and have been doing yoga since I was 18. I was very lucky to discover it so early - it's been a part of my life ever since. These days I practise a few times a week, usually in the mornings. I like that it's a little bit different every day depending on the teacher or class, and that you can do it anywhere in the world. And I love an inversion: upsidedown postures are really good for the skin and for your internal organs. They get things circulating and wake up your brain.'

### If you could pack just one product, what would it be?

'Concealer. Once I've put some on then I feel my best. Maybelline has a product called Instant Anti-Age that's very light.'



'I'm a big believer in moderation. I'm not one to binge eat or starve myself - I never have been. Although waiting too long to eat



isn't good for me and can affect my mood. I have been doing a juice cleanse once a year since I was in my early twenties. I believe in beauty from within and, in addition to a healthy diet, I take Imedeen supplements. The Time Perfection tablets are brilliant for my complexion.'

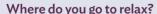


### BEAUTY KIT: CHRISTY TURLINGTON BURNS

The supermodel who has appeared on more than 300 magazine covers talks to Tabitha Joyce

### Do you have any tips for looking after your hair in the sun?

'I spend most of the summer travelling in and out of Long Island, where we stay with my sisters and their families. I always take Rahua shampoo because it's organic and the Finishing Treatment sorts out split ends - it's great after a day in the sun.'



'An airplane is solitude for me. I think I am one of the few people in the world desperate to be without Wi-Fi. In reality I only get that space when I travel or when I'm exercising. I find being alone very healing and very healthy. I also love to take baths, especially after a long run. I put Epsom salts in - the ones with lavender smell so nice. That is a real treat for me.'



### What foods make you feel great?

'I've never really had a sweet tooth. Sea salt is my biggest indulgence, which is not good for every diet, but I have low blood pressure so I'm actually encouraged to eat

oil and lemon to all vegetables. My first pregnancy was over the summer and I couldn't get enough lemon and avocado. When I was pregnant for the second time I was all about sweet potatoes. Obviously there's a certain vitamin that I was craving and needed. One of my favourite meals is still sweet potato with tahini.'

### How else do you look after your skin?

'I really love Rodin oil - I use it on both my skin and hair. Recently though I've also been using Biotherm Blue Therapy oil, which feels amazing. The two really complement one another and help keep my skin hydrated.'

### Do you wear any make-up on holiday?

'A little bit of mascara and some lip gloss; that's it. I think less is more. I want to use products to enhance my own features but I don't want to change them. I prefer where the

industry is now - with more minimal make-up - and the way I am perceived in photographs and films because I feel more like "me".'

it. I add sea salt, olive



RODIN

olio lusso

New (Nimb)

Concealer, £7.99, Maybelline (www.boots.com). Time Perfection, Imedeen, £43.99 (www.boots.com). Finishing Treatment, £38, Rahua (www. net-a-porter.com). Blue Therapy Serum in Oil, £57.40, Biotherm (www.worlddutyfree.com). Luxury Face Oil, £85, Rodin (www.goodhoodstore.com) BELMOND HOTEL SPLENDIDO, PORTOFINO

WHAT YOU SOON COME TO UNDERSTAND IS HOW DIFFERENT EVERYTHING FEELS FROM THE WATER. LUCA FROM THE HOTEL SAYS WITH ALL HIS HEART, "THERE ARE PLACES THAT ONCE YOU SEE THEM, THEY CHANGE YOU." SO YOU ASK, "WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE SOMEONE SPECIAL?" HE STUDIES YOU FOR A MOMENT BEFORE GIVING AWAY HIS SECRET. THEN HE SKETCHES A SIMPLE MAP AND MAKES YOU PROMISE TO TELL NO ONE. LATER YOU SWIM AT HIS SECRET BEACH, THEN REST ON THE DECK OF THE GOZZO WHILE THE SUN WARMS YOU. YOU THINK, "I WILL KEEP THIS WITH ME FOREVER."

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Europe, Venice Simplon-Orient-Express train France, Burgundy, Belmond Afloat in France river cruises Ireland, Belmond Grand Hibernian train (2016) Italy, Amalfi Coast, Belmond Hotel Caruso Italy, Florence, Belmond Villa San Michele Italy, Portofino, Belmond Hotel Splendido Italy, Portofino, Belmond Splendido Mare Italy, Taormina, Belmond Grand Hotel Timeo Italy, Taormina Mare, Belmond Villa Sant'Andrea Italy, Venice, Belmond Hotel Cipriani Portugal, Madeira, Belmond Reid's Palace Russia, St Petersburg, Belmond Grand Hotel Europe Spain, Mallorca, Belmond La Residencia UK departures, Belmond Northern Belle train UK, Edinburgh, Belmond Royal Scotsman train UK, London, Belmond British Pullman train UK, London, Belmond Cadogan Hotel (early 2017) UK, Oxfordshire, Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons

### SOUTH AMERICA

Brazil, Iguassu Falls, Belmond Hotel das Cataratas
Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Belmond Copacabana Palace
Peru, Cusco, Belmond Hotel Monasterio
Peru, Cusco, Belmond Palacio Nazarenas
Peru, Lima, Belmond Miraflores Park
Peru, Machu Picchu, Belmond Hiram Bingham train
Peru, Machu Picchu, Belmond Sanctuary Lodge
Peru, Sacred Valley, Belmond Hotel Rio Sagrado

#### AFRICA

Botswana, Chobe National Park, **Belmond Savute Elephant Lodge**Botswana, Moremi Reserve, **Belmond Khwai River Lodge**Botswana, Okavango Delta, **Belmond Eagle Island Lodge**South Africa, Cape Town, **Belmond Mount Nelson Hotel** 

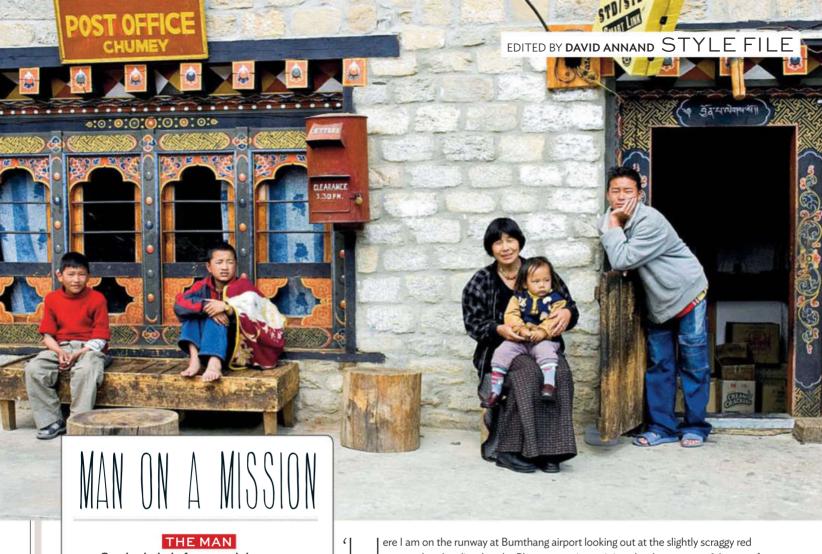
### ASIA

Cambodia, Siem Reap, Belmond La Résidence d'Angkor Indonesia, Bali, Belmond Jimbaran Puri Laos, Luang Prabang, Belmond La Résidence Phou Vao Myanmar, Belmond Orcaella river cruises Myanmar, Belmond Road to Mandalay river cruises Myanmar, Yangon, Belmond Governor's Residence Thailand, Koh Samui, Belmond Napasai Southeast Asia departures, Eastern & Oriental Express train



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Cerebral, dryly funny and dapper as they come, Adam Brown is a brilliant travelling companion. Not least because his luggage would be stuffed with his resortwear brand Orlebar Brown.

### THE MISSION

An ambulatory odyssey to find the hidden Bhutan: 10 days, more than 100 hours of walking, six mountain ridges, four blisters, 2,364 photographs and about a million prayer flags.

#### WEIRDEST PLACE

'The Chele La Pass in Bhutan, a child-burial site about 13,000ft up, completely silent but deafening from the wind at the same time. You can see K2 in the distance on a clear day. It is where I discovered I suffer from vertigo.'

### MUST PACK

'The Hasselblad 503 CW, a medium-format film camera with 50, 80 and 110mm lenses. You can change the backs from colour to black and white, and the film quality is beautiful. Day to day I use a small Leica D-Lux digital – though the iPhone 6 is now so good I often rely on that.'

### MILES TRAVELLED LAST YEAR

96,158 (to be exact)

ere I am on the runway at Bumthang airport looking out at the slightly scraggy red carpet when I realise that the Bhutanese prime minister has been on our 14-seater for the whole flight. I head to my hotel, only to arrive at the same time as the country's queen, who is in town for a festival attended by chic monks, their robes enlivened with ceremonial white cuffs. Three friends and I have ventured to this tiny Himalayan country determined to find the hidden Bhutan, and here we are accidentally hobnobbing with heads of state. Not that I should be surprised by the proximity of royalty – we're staying at the Amankora, in one of the Aman group's five lodges, each beautiful but understated, in keeping with the Bhutanese aesthetic. Luxurious they may be, but they still make a perfect base to get away from the tourist trails and handrails to remote Bhutan in all its beauty.

Our days develop a pattern. We realise that the key is to encourage the guides to go off-piste, along bumpy gravel roads to little-walked ridges. We clamber over unsteady rocks, around huge boulders, the shingle giving way under our feet. The paths are marked with prayer flags – 108 white ones for the dead, coloured ones for the living. We walk along dried-up riverbeds, through forests of unfathomably tall trees, alone apart from the ubiquitous yaks. Buildings are rare. We traipse through the wood for four hours and walk out on to a ridge where we find a gazebo-like building with a stunning, painted ceiling. It gives new meaning to 'the middle of nowhere'.

We visit our guide's village. His 60-year-old mother has never been in a car. We eat buckwheat noodles, spring onions and a curd that might best be described as an acquired taste. This comes with *ara*, the local moonshine, served in petrol cans. I manage three sips.

Soon, however, we realise the danger of seeking out the less-travelled parts of the kingdom. It is Sunday, three days before we are due to fly home, and we are walking in dense woodland. It gets denser. And then total. It dawns on us we're lost, surrounded on all sides by towering bamboo. We fight through, pushing it out of our way with our hands, our legs lacerated. We have half a bottle of water, a few biscuits and no GPS. For four long hours I contemplate a night in the forest where there is nowhere to lie down. We make it back by following a river. The next day, we visit incredible monasteries clinging to the cliff face. We pass one that contains a man who hasn't seen another soul for three years. Another, just out of sight, is home to a monk who has survived without human contact for three decades. We walk in single file, too exhausted to talk, thinking about this isolation, thrilled that while we may be short of 30 years of silent devotion, we have worked hard to find Bhutan's unknown pleasures.'



## The 14.06 to Pengance

The quiet carriage is being militantly policed. The enforcer is in her sixties and not to be trifled with. Another woman gets on, sits down, takes a call. I cheer inwardly as she is immediately and loudly admonished, shamed into silence in front of the whole carriage. In most situations I am on the side of the iconoclasts, the usurpers of authority, but when it comes to the quiet carriage I'm with the hang 'em and flog 'em brigade. I mean it: I demand silence. If I had my way people would be ejected for smiling too loud. And why not? I'm on the lovely London-to-Penzance line; not a journey you want ruined by a ringtone. Once you're out of west London's surprisingly industrial hinterlands – corrugated steel sheds, cement factories, shadowy substations – the view from the track is quickly bucolic: country houses peeking through the trees, canal boats idling at locks, buzzards hanging malevolently in the English air. Before you know it you're in Devon; it's only then that the train starts to dawdle. Down the Exe River estuary we go, to Dawlish and Teignmouth, the tracks hugging the sea so that you might, you fancy, lean from the window and trail your fingers through the water. After that it's over Brunel's forever futuristic Royal Albert Bridge and into Cornwall, where the station names are evidence of its otherness: Liskeard, Lostwithiel, Menheniot; places that are home, surely, to dragons, knights, Gogmagogian giants. The train rolls out of St Erth and we approach Penzance. St Michael's Mount is encircled by the high tide. The scene is unpeopled, silent, serene. I sit with my forehead on the window, content. Modern train journeys may not be the romantic experiences of the steam age, but the introduction of the quiet carriage is something for which we might give two (muted) cheers.





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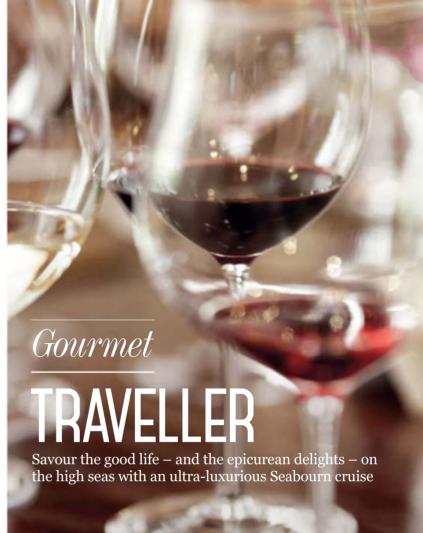
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### TRAVELLER READER EVENT

Opposite page dockwise from top left: Romance on the veranda; Seabourn's wine school; The exquisite onboard cuisine; 'Welcome aboard' This page inset from top: A Seabourn ship; Singapore skyline; Demetri Wolters

Imagine your favourite boutique hotel: luxurious, yet relaxed; elegant, yet casual; sumptuous, yet understated. Small enough to feel like home (right down to your favourite wine being stocked in your room), yet big enough to offer the type of six-star, allinclusive service that leaves you in no doubt you are on holiday. Now imagine being ensconced in that same boutique hotel even as you travel the world. The stuff dreams are made of? Not with Seabourn. Sailing with Seabourn is unlike any other travel adventure. Designed for just 458 guests, its intimate ships are the perfect blend of glamorous elegance, impeccable service, exquisite cuisine and highly personalised destination experiences. Thoughtfully-appointed suites are spacious, and over 90 per cent come with private verandas, all the better to soak up the views. And what views they are - for Seabourn's fleet of inimitable ships journey year round to the world's most intriguing destinations, whether to the heart of landmark cities; to UNESCO World Heritage Sites: to remote, hidden gems, or to picturesque ports where larger ships cannot venture. En route, you can enjoy the passing scenery from your private veranda; relax on deck as the sea breeze cools you; learn about the destinations visited from Seabourn's team of on-board experts; help yourself to the open bars – and, in between, indulge in fabulous cuisine designed to capture the essence of your seafaring adventure. Afterall, some of life's most cherished moments occur around the dining table. With Seabourn, that might be in The Restaurant, a sophisticated venue offering delectable choices prepared to order by talented chefs. Or, for a delightful change of pace, try Restaurant 2's tasting menus with a contemporary flair each evening. Or finally, visit the more informal Colonnade, with lavish buffet-style breakfasts and lunches served either indoors or al fresco overlooking the sea. Take your pick to suit your mood - on Seabourn, guests may choose where and when to dine as they wish - then savour cuisine to suit your setting. Literally, For every dish served - from French fries to foie gras - is infused with authentic regional flavours; every gourmet experience on board guaranteed to bring the destination to your dining plate.

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The evening will begin with a champagne reception at 6.30pm, followed by wine tasting at 7.00pm 'around the Mediterranean' with Berry Bros. & Rudd – a journey through the wines of Europe, led by renowned 'Master of Wine' Demetri Walters. Delicious canapés from Berry Bros. & Rudd's chef will be served, and goodie bags including contributions from both Berry Bros. & Rudd and Seabourn will be presented to all guests.

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## TRENDWATCH

### LIFE IN MINIATURE

Does size matter? For a growing number of people luxury is measured not in ever-increasing square footage but in the amount of freedom their lifestyle affords them. The Tiny House Movement has been making big noises across the Atlantic, rejecting the American Dream (work hard, buy more) for a debt-free, environmentally lighter and simpler life in homes usually between 100 and 400sq ft. At the same time 'technomads' are embracing a 21st-century roving existence, where a well-connected generation of workers can live and log on from anywhere with a decent Wi-Fi signal. At the intersection of these two trends is a new wave of mobile architecture, in which our physical world is finally becoming almost as transportable as our virtual lives. Cleverly designed living pods and ultra-modern-yet-mini prefab homes are far from the dated image of static caravans and trailer parks. Now Spanish architecture firm Abaton has created a micro home for two (pictured; from about £15,400) which can be popped on the back of a lorry, placed almost anywhere and set up in just a day. The 300sq ft space is covered in grey cement-board panels and looks almost like a little Monopoly house – until the front opens up to reveal floor-to-ceiling siding glass doors. Inside, clad in sustainably grown, white-bleached wood, is a kitchen-living room, with a double bedroom to one side and a bathroom to the other. This is a much smarter take on the hipster cabin obsession that revels in woodsy, lo-fi authenticity. But if you are not ready to sell all your belongings on Ebay just yet, get a taste of tiny living with a stay in the LoftCube atop Hotel Daniel in Graz, Austria, one of architect Werner Aisslinger's futuristic, glass-wrapped prefab pods. FIONA KERR



# BORN

BENEATH THE SURFACE OF BRAZIL'S MOST WEIRD AND





WONDERFUL BEACH SECRET, NOTHING IS QUITE AS IT SEEMS

BY MICHELLE JANA CHAN. PHOTOGRAPHS BY SQUIRE FOX







Between the 17th and 19th centuries, the French, Dutch and Portuguese clashed, conquered and colonised the stretch of Brazil wedged between the mouth of the Amazon and the north-eastern shoulder of South America. Back then, blown across the Atlantic by the powerful north-east trade winds, it might take a ship just six weeks to reach these shores from Europe. There was the lure of gold, of course, and this was also a prime location to harvest indigenous trees and cultivate plantations of sugar cane, cacao, tobacco, cotton and coffee.

São Luís now feels like a forgotten place. Some residents seem to belong to another age, living on borrowed time, under the illusion that cotton and cane might still be king. Local fashion designer Rodrigo Raposo, whose gowns cost from £1,500, speaks about dressing the high society of Maranhão state, wealthy ranching landowners and the débutante scene. It's more *Gone with the Wind* than globalisation.

Sundays are slow. Every day is slow. Among the lattice of crumbling colonial buildings and cobbled streets you can hear children kicking a





football and someone playing reggae music. A brass band made up of school kids trumpets past. Men doze in the shade of mango trees on stone benches brought by the Portuguese as ballast, the weight of which they were to exchange for gold. I drink a can of cool Guaraná Jesus, the local soft drink, and feel the salty breeze on my face.

Ah, the wind. Now that is something everyone talks about. In her lyrics, big-name samba singer Alcione, whose roots are here, reminisces of her home state: 'In this corner of the north/Where the winds blow strong/ And there are a thousand beautiful things/Everything

A sand dune in Jericoacoara. Opposite, a local on Milano Beach a 30-metre-high sand dune, bleached and granular among the lush, glossy greenery. It signals the start of the Lençóis Maranhenses National Park, the rippling dunes of which run 100km along the coastline and 50km inland. Up close, it is clear this is no desert. Over every chiselled ridge and in every hollow there are shimmering lagoons sheltering nesting birds, turtles and fish. They fill up in the rainy season, and evaporate during the rest of the year.

Nobody knows for certain why the dunes are here. Is it sand carried in as sediment by the mighty rivers? Or sand brought from the sea by strong currents? Do

## THIS PLACE FEELS BARELY VISITED. IT COULD BE THE SAHARA BUT WHERE THE MAGIC OF MIRAGES COMES GOOD

speaks to us of love.' She tells me the wind 'dictates the rhythm of our daily lives'. In São Luís there are the soft lyrical sea breezes that come with being an island, as well as the blustery *bros* named after the final syllable of the months when they blow hardest: *setembro*, *outubro*, *novembro*, *dezembro*. The *bros* are not only strong but 'all mixed up', people here say, 'when the wind comes from every direction and you can't keep your dress down'.

I leave town in an easterly direction, following the coast, before catching a boat on the Rio Preguiças, which translates as 'lazy river'. Fishermen in *saveiros*, wooden boats with triangular sails like feluccas, dot the wide expanse at the river's mouth. Some string up a hammock between the mast and tiller so they can snooze as they sail. As we sweep down this river, hemmed in on either side by rainforest, there is a sudden, startling blister of

the extreme tides expose vast beaches, which are then whipped inland by the region's relentless winds? Everyone has a different theory; the mere existence of the Lençóis is part of the allure. With the lagoons full to the brim during my visit, I swim among lilies, looking for freshwater tiger turtles and wolffish said to survive the dry season by burrowing deep into the sand to find moisture. Or perhaps they lay their eggs in the sand and their young are born during the first rains. Or perhaps birds carry the sticky fish eggs on their feet and deposit them, by chance, in the lagoons. Again, nobody knows. This place feels unstudied and barely visited, too. I scramble up and down the dunes without another person in sight. It could be the Sahara but where the sorcery of mirages comes good.

Those in the know skip Barreirinhas, the gateway town bordering the park, and head to remote Atins,

















closer to the heart of the dunes and backing on to a wild white-sand beach. Only accessible by four-wheel-drive, it is nothing more than a dusty street or two. But recently some leading figures in the kitesurfing community have called Atins one of the best spots in the world for the sport. With steady winds and calm waters protected by a sand bar, the conditions could not be more perfect.

Atins is still *tranqüilo*. I see only two sunbathers along the entire stretch of beach. At Pousada Tia Rita a few French backpackers are renting hammocks for \$8 a night. 'It's chilled here,' Rita says, sounding younger than her 60 years. 'You come for a couple of days and you want to stay.' At Rancho do Buna restaurant I eat grilled robalo fish, and crabmeat with onions and tomatoes sprinkled with dried manioc flour. There is a peacock who looks in the mirror all day and a cat who studies maps hanging on the wall. 'If Atins starts to change, I'll move,' Buna says. 'I don't want to see the magic go.'

switch from four-wheel-drive to motorboat to travel across one of the world's great river deltas, the Parnaíba. Here the mangroves are the height of skyscrapers and the islands are more than twice the size of Bermuda. The primates are so smart they're called Einstein monkeys; they use stone tools to crack open nuts. Iguanas, trying to avoid preying snakes, weigh down the very tips of branches and parakeets flap across the sky. I stop to see rusted shipwrecks in

Above from left: in a bar on Milano beach; a kitesurfing board in Prea.

Opposite, from top left: Milano beach bar; art in Portas da Amazonia hotel in São Luís; a couple in Jericoacoara; a view of the sea from Essenza hotel

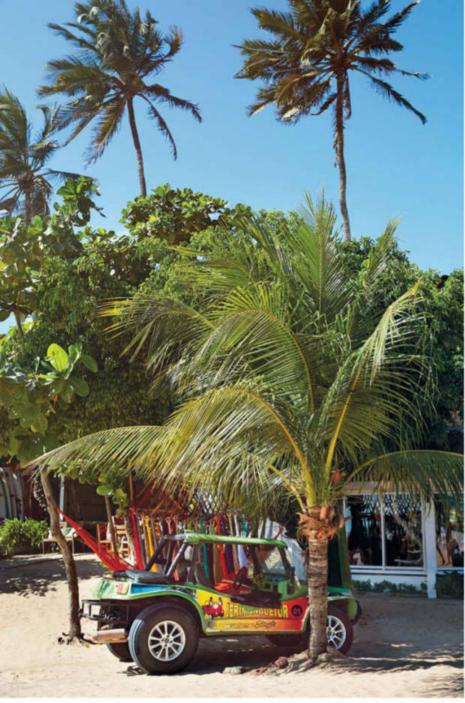
the shallows. Fishermen haul in shrimp, and offer me a bucket for free; whole families clamber into the mud to catch electric-blue crabs.

I find the naturalist Pedro da Costa Silva, nicknamed Pedro *holandês* (Dutch Pete) because he speaks five languages. The son of local rice farmers, he knows more about the delta than anyone. He tells me how he once caught a six-metre anaconda ('You need a good grip') and shows me scars from attacks by a freshwater ray and a lancehead viper ('I love poisonous snakes'). We head off looking for the silky anteater, the smallest of its species and arguably the most elusive. 'If you lock one in a box and come back later, it will have gone,' da Costa says of this little Houdini.

We scramble over dunes, tearing our way across cashew-tree forests and squelching among the mangroves; the aerial roots curve so high it feels like a journey through the ribcage of a blue whale. We spot a scorpion and a ground owl but, unsurprisingly perhaps, no anteater. So we head off to get fresh coconuts at the nearby farm of Maria and Pedro Militão, the only indigenous Indians for miles. Maria talks about a silky anteater she once had as a pet: 'It was so jealous it would bite any child who sat in my lap,' she says. 'I also had a monkey addicted to marijuana so I gave him to the man who was always stoned.' Just down the coast from where they live, there is a wind farm. I wonder what the community here thinks of these gigantic machines. One man moans















former chef at Rio's Copacabana Palace Hotel. Jeri has just five sandy streets yet everything your holiday heart desires. It even has the requisite rock arch formation on the beach. And there's no need to worry about over development; Jeri sits in a national park and so any further expansion will be restrained.

Ronaldo Soares e Silva, known as Dadinho, was one of the first people to arrange trips to Jeri. He arrived 25 years ago, fleeing his home town after getting five women pregnant, two at the same time. There was no electricity here then and certainly no visitors. 'Kitesurfing has saved the whole north of Brazil,' he says. 'This region used to be 100 per cent failed beaches but this sport has changed everything for us. Kiters travel the world looking for a wind like ours.' In high season there are 1,000 kites in these skies.

In fact, the best wind for kitesurfing is on either side of Jeri, in places such as Prea, where a Carioca called Mosquito runs the Rancho do Kite school and says he can teach anyone in two weeks. 'With 330 days of wind a year blowing 35 knots, we never have to miss a lesson.'

I spend a few hours with Andrade Vasconcelos, one of Mosquito's team, who gets me up on a board in minutes. His father and grandfather were fishermen but he says he'll never follow them. 'Fishermen hate the wind,' he says. 'I'll never fish. I love it.'

Back in Jeri, everyone is out on the sand, wind in their hair: joyriding on quad bikes; sand-surfing on the dunes; riding horses along the endless shoreline. At dusk, capoeira circles evolve to the beat of drums.

### IF YOU'RE LUCKY YOU MIGHT SEE THE CAPOEIRA MASTER WHO CAN SOMERSAULT 30 TIMES DOWN THE DUNES INTO THE WAVES

about how his electricity bill has not come down. 'I think they're beautiful,' Maria's niece says, wistfully.

The town of Barra Grande is the first sign of Brazil cool. A French couple, Sophie and Frédéric Fournier, have built Pousada Chic using local materials: cumaru wood, carnauba palm and the huge scales of the camurupim fish. They hope to see this place become a kitesurfing haven; already the sport's top names have come here to take part in professional competitions. We drive along the beach and traverse the mouths of rivers by motor rafts, boarded by crossing two wobbly planks. There are no real roads leading to our final destination and that is part of the mystique, I am told.

The name Jericoacoara is almost whispered. A communion of Caipirinhas and capoeira, bikinis and berimbau tunes, sandy dunes and sunsets and, of course, the wind. Until now, 'Jeri', as it is fondly known, has been a hangout for Brazilians and other in-the-know windsurfers and kitesurfers, but this is more than a hippy beach town. Restaurants serve sushi, fusion and even molecular gastronomy, as well as local dishes of camarão, caranguejo and peixe: shrimps, crab and fresh fish. There are pretty pousadas, little palm-fronded spas and live forró music in the bars. The newest hotel, Essenza, wouldn't seem out of place in São Paulo, with a 100-metre pool, yanzu water therapy and the

Above, poolside at the Essenza.

Opposite, clockwise from top left: a dune buggy in Jericoacoara; Casa de Santo Antônio in Parnaíba; Pousada Chic; Portas da Amazonia. Previous pages, a kitesurfer

This sexed-up martial art is at once languorous and frenzied. Balletic movements can escalate into a blur. As the energy wanes, pop-up kiosks serve cachaça cocktails and the sound of forró ramps up. At dusk there is a mandatory pilgrimage up a dune nicknamed 'the pillowcase', a play on the vast Lençóis which translates as 'bedsheets'. The town assembles to watch the sunset. Here it slips into the sea, something unusual in Brazil where most of the coastline faces east or north. If you're lucky you might catch sight of Amarildo, a capoeira master who can somersault 30 times down the steep dunes into the crashing waves. Offshore, kiters and windsurfers play to the crowd with their aerobatic leaps. And as the light fades, we are all bewitched. When the last chink of day is extinguished, the spectators clap and whoop. Some make a wish, but I'm not sure what more you could wish for.

### **GETTING THERE**

Dehouche Travel (+44 871 284 7770; www.dehouche. com), a British company based in Rio de Janeiro, offers an eight-night north-coast itinerary, including four nights on the road, four nights at the Essenza in Jericoacoara and return flights from the UK, from £2,260 per person



## ABOUT FACE

Award-winning photographer Steve McCurry is best known for his image of a green-eyed Afghan girl which made the cover of National Geographic in 1985. For the past four decades he has travelled the world with his camera, focusing on capturing 'the unguarded moment, the essential soul peeking out'. In these portraits he gives an insight into the people of Tibet





















elbourne has a secret. Actually, Melbourne has many secrets. Its best bars, shops and restaurants are hidden away, behind anonymous doors and up concealed staircases, but nothing is quite so carefully tucked out of sight as the Melburnians' weekend playground, an hour south of the city: the delicious beaches and tree-lined vineyards of the Mornington Peninsula. I've been coming here since the 1970s, about the same time my Melbourne relatives realised that the old money was clustered out on the furthest point at Portsea and Sorrento, leaving the rest of the peninsula – orchards and wide, sun-dappled roads fringed with pale-barked gum trees and pervaded by amber butterflies and the clear scent of eucalyptus – for newcomers. And soon they began looking at their new land and empty wine cellars, and wondering whether the former couldn't be used to fill the latter.

Elsewhere in Australia, thirsty Swiss-German immigrants planted vines enthusiastically – and successfully – as soon as they landed in the 19th century. In Mornington, however, the first English arrivals to attempt winemaking (the Balcombes, at a property called the Briars, in the 1850s) were so unsuccessful that their short-lived output was nicknamed Briars' Vinegar. Over 100 years later, some of those Melbourne escapees tried again, deciding that the area's cool climate was perfect for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, the grapes of Burgundy, or Champagne. Unlike Mornington, neither of those well-known regions has water on three sides (both are landlocked). Nor does their limestone soil resemble ancient volcanic granite. And neither has ever been in much danger of bushfires, or vine damage by kangaroos. So it's no surprise that Mornington Peninsula's wines didn't turn out French at all.

Nevertheless, those winemakers were soon talking up the area as the Burgundy of the southern hemisphere. And being Australians, no sooner did they begin making decent wine than they opened restaurants alongside the vineyards to drink it in, which was handy for visitors but may not have helped the area's identity crisis. (Burgundy has great restaurateurs and great winemakers. They are not the same people.) My first experience of the peninsula

Above, Foxeys Hangout winery-restaurant.
Opposite, smoothies at Store Fifteen.
Previous pages, from left: the monochrome kitchen at Orchard Keepers; the living room at Port Phillip Estate









was naked in an oak barrel: I was five. My father's cousins had spent their time planting vines instead of building a swimming pool, so they'd filled a barrel with water and were oak-ageing the children alongside their wines. By the time I had grown too big for that barrel, the early adopters had been joined by various other wineries, and farm-gate stores, restaurants and delis were springing up like the patches of wild mushrooms that knowing locals hunt down, then jealously guard, each autumn.

Lindsay McCall recalls those early days. 'There were only about six of us making wine then,' he says wistfully, as we inhale his aromatic, blackcurrant-and-peppery 2009 Paringa Shiraz with the pinkest slice of grass-fed sirloin.

McCall might lament that now he can't even get a table in his own restaurant on a Saturday night but the fact that the peninsula's food scene is catching up with the wine is good news for everyone else. Paringa has a Chef Hat, the Australian equivalent of a Michelin star, and there's a handful of other Hatted restaurants nearby: La Pétanque, where they smoke aioli, pickle daikon and purée capsicum as easily as most of us toast bread, and Terminus at Flinders Hotel, which mixes up North African, French and local flavours with impressive fluency. Many of the other winery restaurants – Montalto, Polperro, Yabby Lake – are sophisticated too, but even then, there's none of the foldednapkin superiority of French fine dining, which may be why Australia has never opened its doors to the Michelin Guide.

In fact, Mornington's soil has been as fruitful for its food scene as it has for its winemakers. There is a farmers' market in almost every small town. Hot Melbourne chefs nip down weekly to forage for ingredients or buy supplies – between a spot of surfing. Even the breweries and cider-makers serve good food: at Red Hill Brewery the barbecues are laden with beef brisket and pulled pork, and the cider lounge at Mock Red Hill orchards serves platters of local produce and cheese. Perhaps it's a hangover from the

Above from left: the mechanical mascot of Ten Minutes by Tractor restaurant; pizza at Montalto. Opposite, the dining room at Polperro





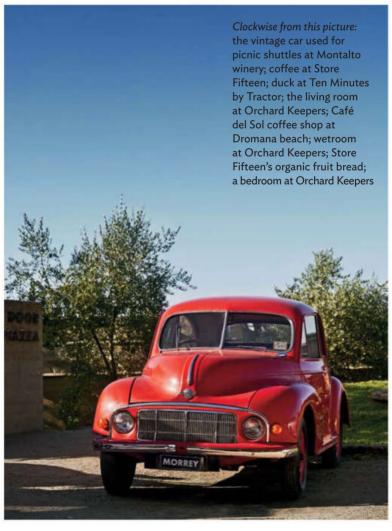
















First Fleet, back in New South Wales in 1788, almost starving to death, or maybe it's just that the Mornington Peninsula is such a great place to grow, cook and serve food, but nobody here seems able to do anything without throwing in a meal alongside.

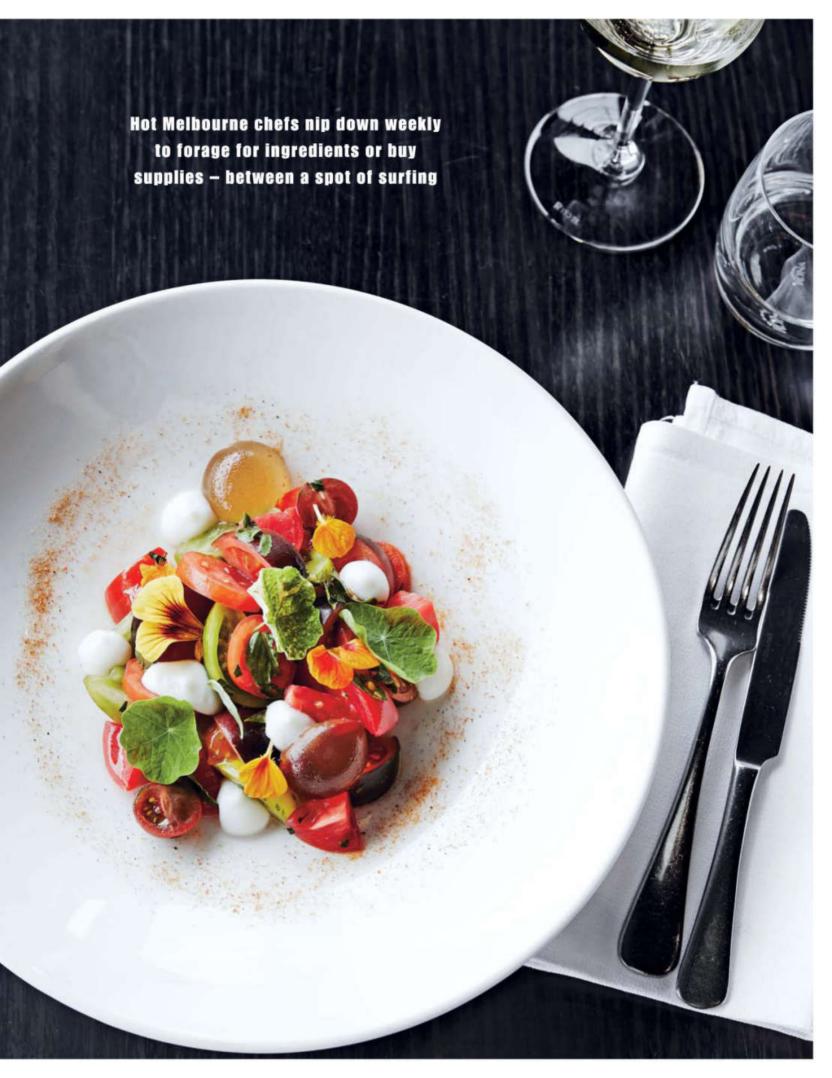
One rare exception is Aaron Drummond of Circe wines – but then, his 'tasting room' is a barrel and two stools, so dinner would be a stretch. He is one of Australia's freshest crop of winemakers, still working in a big Yarra Valley winery while he pursues his dream down here in his free time. It may not be paying the rent yet, but his Pinot is some of the brightest I've ever had – and, like its maker, says nothing about Burgundy.

he people who really did come down here and see something familiar were not French or English but the Greeks and Italians who, after arriving in Melbourne after World War II, took their families to the tumbledown streets and west-coast beaches of Dromana. 'These days Dromana is a lot smarter,' says John Filiopoulos, and he is one of the people making that happen. Greek-Australian himself, he is co-owner of Dee's Kitchen, a stripped-back, laid-back café five minutes from the beach, with Dee Busani-Caligiuri, who was originally Israeli: two Australians by descent, far from their native Mediterranean, making great food by a rather different sea.

Dee's could be a beach caff, except for the heaving wine shelves that decorate the distressed walls. Or perhaps, I think, tucking into squeaky-fresh trout and local beetroot, dill and peas on homemade toast, Mornington Peninsula just has a better class of caff. As I eat, Garry Crittenden walks in. Another of the region's wine pioneers, he picked up on that Mediterranean vibe. At their lakeside winery the Crittendens make light, easy-drinking Italian whites – Vermentino and Pinot Grigio – as well as Italy's great reds, Sangioviese and Nebbiolo – 'the greatest variety in the world,' according to Crittenden. Others are catching on, but the region won't be giving up on French roots any time soon.

Some plants, like some people, move easily between places: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are called international varieties for a good reason. But these transplants don't stay the

Above from left: knickerbocker glory at the Port Phillip Estate restaurant; the architectural staircase at the winery. Opposite, Port Phillip's heirloom-tomato salad





same. The avocados and cherries they grow in Mornington Peninsula's cool pine forests are richer and riper than their Old World forebears. They have adapted to a jutting slice of land that varies from forest to orchard to vineyard to surf-swept beaches thick with wattle and tea-tree scrub, just as the people have, both in accent and in understanding of their land.

My next stop, Port Phillip Estate, is a transplant if ever there was one. From the outside, it's an uncompromising wall of rammed earth; once inside, the whole curved inner wall is glass, and the vineyards unfold before you. Waking in one of the elegant suites and looking out on that sweeping view was such a joy that I wondered why the Burgundians had never tried something like this. But the sensibility is entirely different. For Australians, the pleasures of the table should be shared as widely as possible. The expansiveness of New World hospitality seems to suit a place so generously endowed with space.

On my last day, I walk up to Arthurs Seat, the highest point, and look out beyond Dromana across to the Bellarine Peninsula, which comes round to meet the tip at Portsea like arms encircling Port Phillip Bay. It's a spectacular view, with woolly dark trees jostling low-lying buildings, and the water shining blue between the embrace of the bay's coastline. Turn south, though, and there's nothing but Tasmania between here and Antarctica. I feel a moment's pity for those first English settlers: homesick travellers who couldn't even make decent wine to take the edge off their longing for the old country. Instead, they named their towns for England's south coast – Shoreham and Rye and Hastings – an exercise in magical thinking even more wishful than trying to reimagine this fertile strip as a New World Burgundy. But why bother with comparisons? You don't see the Burgundians hankering after beaches, avocado groves and pickled daikon. The only way in which this place really needs to copy the French is by shrugging off those comparisons and enjoying being a wine- and food-lover's nirvana – and an entirely Australian one, at that.

Opposite, floorto-ceiling views at Port Phillip Estate's restaurant in Red Hill South



# WHERE TO EAT CELLAR DOORS

#### **POLPERRO**

Owner and winemaker Sam Coverdale's new bistro serves local produce – the wood-grilled king prawns are garnished with 'Sam's lemons' – in a modern vine-facing dining room decorated with metal-tubed wingback chairs, dark tiles and eloquent landscape photographs. Red Hill. www.polperrowines.com.au. About £70 for two

#### **PARINGA ESTATE**

The dilemma in this open-plan expanse is what to look at: the cellar-door bar clustered with tasters; the fermentation tanks visible in the room below; the 180-degree view of the vineyards; or chef Julian Hills's intricate food, where snapper is crowned with shellfish and sprinkled with grains, and duck is jazzed up with cured watermelon rind. Red Hill South. www.paringaestate.com.au. About £80 for two

#### **TEN MINUTES BY TRACTOR**

Stuart Bell's food has won this restaurant two
Chef Hats. Ultra-locally sourced – much of it in the
large kitchen gardens – it is also very pretty:
the prawn and cauliflower risotto is topped with
deep green dill yogurt and tiny violet flowers.
Main Ridge. www.tenminutesbytractor.com.au.
About £90 for two

# AWAY FROM THE WINERIES DEE'S KITCHEN

Super-fresh breakfast and lunch menus with a Mediterranean vibe in breezy surroundings that suit the beachside location. *Dromana.* www.deeskitchen.com.au. About £20 for two

#### THE LONG TABLE

Samantha Fitzgerald co-owns this much-loved spot with her husband Andrew, who is now chef at Polperro. The traditional look (wooden beams and velvet-covered church pews) is belied by the food, which mixes the output of neighbouring farms – beets, mushrooms, broccolini – with more distant influences, from boudin noir to wagyu beef. Red Hill South. www.thelongtable.com.au. About £70 for two

# WHERE TO DRINK OCEAN EIGHT

Named for a scenic hole on the nearby golf course, the rose-and-juniper-filled gardens here are as delightful to look at as Mike Aylward's wines are to drink. Shoreham. www.oceaneight.com.au

#### **MERRICKS ESTATE**

George and Jacky Kefford's little wooden cellar door is open the first weekend of the month, for very informal tastings of their delicious wines. Merricks. www.merricksestate.com.au

## **FOXEYS HANGOUT**

The name comes from the habit two 1930s fox trappers had of hanging their daily catch on a nearby gum tree, but now Foxeys is a buzzy spot in which to drink its lively wines and enjoy a blackboard menu of small plates. Red Hill. www.foxeys-hangout.com.au

#### **STORE FIFTEEN**

Fresh juice and smoothies are served in mason jars, alongside superb single-origin coffee in this hangout on Mornington's main drag.

Mornington. +61 3 5975 5015

# WHERE TO STAY

#### BIG BLUE BACKYARD

Down a forest path sits a secluded cabin where everything, from the fresh-baked hazelnut cookies to the driftwood furniture made by the owner, is beautifully thought out. St Andrew's Beach. www. bigbluebackyard.com.au. From about £285 per night

#### **ORCHARD KEEPERS**

Between an orchard and a winery is this deceptively large house, shaded by a giant sequoia tree.

A little suntrap parlour looks out towards the original worker's cottage; a charming hideaway for two with its own wetroom, kitchen and veranda bath. Red Hill. www.orchardkeepers.com.au.

Sleeps 10. From about £290 per night

#### SPINDRIFT BEACH RETREAT

Balnarring has plenty of waterfront properties, which makes Spindrift's seclusion – and its empty views – even more impressive. There's a beach-hut feel, but most beach huts lack a rain shower, a barbecue or quite such a comfortable bed. Balnarring. www.spindrift.boutiqueretreats.com.au. From about £275 per night

#### **PORT PHILLIP ESTATE**

This winery is an architectural triumph. Below the spectacular restaurant are six plush suites, all dark wood and marble, with deep bathtubs. Red Hill South. www.portphillipestate.com.au.

Doubles from about £240

#### **GETTING THERE**

Singapore Airlines (www.singaporeair.com) flies from London to Melbourne. For more details on the Mornington Peninsula, visit www.tourism.vic.gov.au





You all work somewhere on your year away, but what's it like to go back? Newspaper editor and Lucian Freud biographer Geordie Greig does just that in India's Tamil Nadu













HIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, aged 18, I arrived alone in a village in south India so small that it wasn't even a dot on the map. I brought with me two New & Lingwood shirts, a little black radio and a toothbrush. As tiny as it was (98 villagers among India's then 700 million population), it also had the longest place name I had ever encountered: Lakshminaikenpalayam. It was about 20 miles from Coimbatore, a city known as the Manchester of India, in the heart of Tamil Nadu, and was my home for 10 months, where I was a very amateurish teacher of art and English at the village school, Sri Ramaswamy Naidu Vidyalayam.

It was on a dusty plain surrounded by tobacco and onion fields with the odd wandering cow or buffalo. There were no telephones, little electricity, no fridges, one car (an Ambassador, proudly polished daily – but never used – by the most prosperous villager) and all food (vegetarian) was cooked by wood fire. I was the only westerner for 500 miles and was referred to by the children as the *velai carnum* (white man) with *tangam* (gold) on his head. They were generous folk for, while my hair was longish, mouse-brown would have been more accurate. We had curry three times a day. A white dhothi was provided to wrap around my waist. I took to the beedi to smoke and betel nut to chew. I went native. And loved it.

# I TOOK TO THE BEEDI TO SMOKE AND BETEL NUT TO CHEW. I WENT NATIVE AND LOVED IT. THE REST MY LIFE UNFOLDED MORE CONVENTIONALLY

Afterwards, the rest of my life unfolded more conventionally: university, job, mortgage, marriage, children, school fees, climbing the greasy pole.

But so much stemmed from that first independent adventure, that time in Lakshminaikenpalayam, arranged by the gap-year organisation Project Trust. (Also on Project was Tilda Swinton, who went to South Africa to work in a children's home.) I experienced a profound culture clash, but I must have seemed as alien to the villagers as they initially were to me. They had never owned a television or a record player (Tamil films, travelling circuses or trance-like drums and dancing at night formed their only entertainment). I had never been in a place where a single track meant apartheid, dividing the so-called Untouchables or Harijans from the higher castes on the other side. Vegetarianism was the rule rather than the exception, and alcohol was illegal. As a foreigner I was allowed a liquor licence, so I bought and sold 12 bottles of whisky a month to boost my £10 salary. I developed a deep love for India, which I have since visited more than 20 times, but never until now have I been back to my school.

Today, as I returned to tour Tamil Nadu and show my wife where I had lived, much had changed as well as much being the same. We landed at Coimbatore airport and were met by SP Subramanian, the school's basketball coach and PE teacher, who had been my stalwart friend all those years ago, introducing me

Clockwise from left: Visalam hotel, Kanadukathan; the Oberoi Trident, Chennai; Chettinadu Mansion, Karaikudi; a house outside Lakshminaikenpalayam; the dining room at Rajakkad Estate; Raman the laundryman. Previous pages: a truck in Lakshminaikenpalayam; pupils at Sri Ramaswamy Naidu Vidyalayam school

to goat curry, forcing me to try to learn the language and helping me to adapt from the English shires. It was like re-meeting India's Mr Chips. His moustache and hair were now snow white, but apart from that he was exactly the same. 'Wanakam! Sapadajah? (How are you? Have you eaten?),' he asked and immediately I was back into my broken Tamil. And so to the school, winding our way across the plains to the village, which was almost freakily unchanged. Sivakami, the tea lady, asked me where I had been. Her prices had risen from 30 paisa a cup to eight rupees. The dhobi (laundryman) Raman and his wife, Sarawaysi, were still working away. The sweeper, Vellingiri, who had kept my cell-like room clean, was still there. The children at the school had, of course, all grown up and gone. And some had gone far. S Balasubramaniam, then 12, whose grandfather was the holy man at the one tiny Hindu temple, had always been super bright. He was now working in the USA. K Selveraj was now a policeman in Coimbatore. The school had expanded, and the grandchildren of the founder, Ramaswamy Naidu, a Coimbatore industrialist, were maintaining his philanthropic zeal, investing in computers and new buildings.

Faded blue airmail letters I had kept in a box in my bedroom for almost four decades added a poignant purpose to my return. They had been sent by pupils after I had left India. 'Thank you very much for the letter and stamps. I do not forget you promisly (sic) end of my life. With God's help I definitely come to your country. Please send my all respects to your family. Your friend S Balasundaram.' At the top of the letter is written 'God is Love. Trust in God.' They were little time capsules of friendship, which released memories that made me want to go

# FADED AIRMAIL LETTERS WERE TIME CAPSULES OF FRIENDSHIP, 'WITH GOD'S HELP I COME TO YOUR COUNTRY', THEY READ

back. The visit was moving. Such affection from those who knew me. Some of their lives seemed caught in a time warp as I kept thinking back to my late teenage years. I was asked to address the children from the schoolyard, and the faces seemed to echo those I had known more than a generation back.

After our time in Lakshminaikenpalayam, SP Subramanian saw us off from Coimbatore railway station for our next stop, Trichy, four hours away. He had given us a splendid picnic breakfast for the train, but we couldn't help but be enticed by masala dosa (rice pancakes) with coconut chutney and tamarind sauce from wallahs going up and down the carriages. The curries in South India, served on a banana leaf, are different from those anywhere else in the country: hot, light, and, in my view, the best Indian food to be found. And so, stomachs filled, we set off on our looping exploration of the rest of Tamil Nadu, a more innocent, less predictable route than the well-worn golden triangle of Rajasthan.

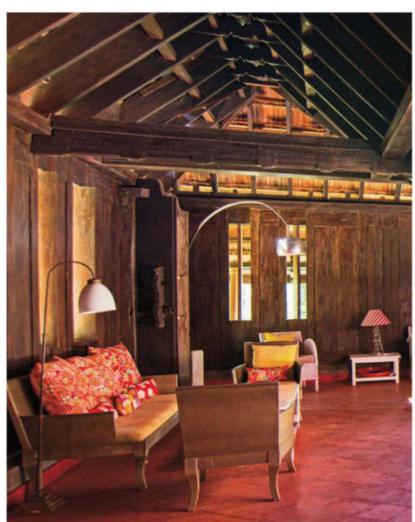
In the jungle we stayed at Rajakkad Estate, an 18th-century house built in Kerala but moved bit by bit to a coffee plantation in the foothills of the Western Ghats by the British inventor and adventurer Jeremy Fry. This delightful place, reassembled around a traditional courtyard, was sensitively turned into a hotel in 2011.

The tranquillity of Rajakkad Estate in rural Dindigul contrasts with the streets of Tamil Nadu's bustling cities and towns such as Palani, where hawkers clamour for the attention of passers-by



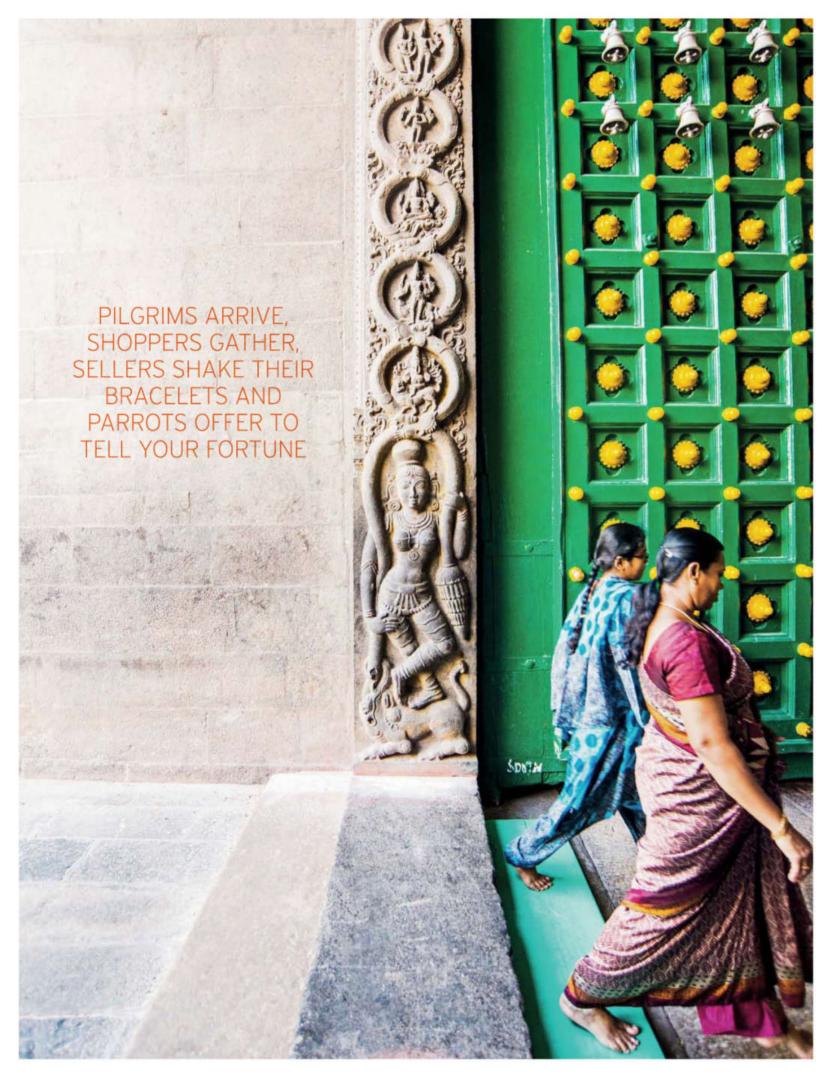
















Clockwise from left, a portrait of the owner at the Chettinadu Mansion, Karaikudi; an array of spices at Visalam hotel in Kanadukathan; the Kapaleeshawarar Temple in Chennai

A sign in the room warns that clothes are cleaned by being pummelled on a rock in the river. The food is as organic as you can get. Yoga and head massages are provided, as is a hammock outside your room. The gardens are lush with jackfruit, papaya and avocado trees. This is the country at its most tranquil; a chance to rest easy from the rub and rhythm of chaotic India, the only sound being the beak-on-bark rattle of a woodpecker. People come here to soak up the peace; there is little else to do except for hillside walks through the forests, past thundering waterfalls. It feels like somewhere Mowgli might have re-entered the human race after bonding with Baloo.

We then moved eastwards. When I was first in Tamil Nadu all those years ago, I travelled everywhere by rickety bus. Once I embarked on a 14-hour journey with Tamil music blaring. We slept in the bus, me and two other teachers and 35 schoolchildren, and survived on food from roadside cafés. This time, in soft middle age, I had hired a car and driver. Jose, a Catholic from Kerala, was entrepreneurial India personified. He bought a learn-German CD at the tea stall on our way to see the lost mansions of the south. We were heading to Chettinad, once a bubble of 19th-century banking wealth, with some 22,000 grand weddingcake villas in one small area. Ramu, guest manager at the Visalam hotel in Kanadukathan, invited me on an early-morning bicycle ride to see wild peacocks. Afterwards, he asked if I would like to have tea at his home. I politely said yes, expecting a modest bungalow, but instead we went to an 18th-century architectural jewel with three courtyards, carved columns and a princely façade – all this on a dusty, semi-paved road, past a half-full water tank. And everywhere a gentle air of slow leisure. Our hotel itself was another such house, Art Deco in style, with high ceilings and long corridors. With its swimming pool and shady colonnades, it was a throwback to grand living, and yet had that thrilling sense of not having been touched by developers.

From Chettinad we wound our way through paddy fields, past scenes of ploughmen and buffaloes at work, to Madurai, a lively place where everything revolves around the big daddy of Hindu temples, the Great Temple of Meenakshi-Sundareswarar, tall and multi-coloured as a packet of liquorice allsorts. The second largest city in Tamil Nadu, Madurai was built on trade in pearls, silks and spices dating back to 300 BC. Our hotel, the Gateway, is set above the sprawl on a high slope with a sweeping panorama of the rooftops. Bollywood music drifts in over the houses, parrots offer to tell your fortune and sari-clad street sellers shake their silver ankle bracelets. Pilgrims arrive, shoppers gather, millions of Indians amass in the streets. It is strange being back in a country where the senses, smells and feel of the place are so familiar. The hustle and bustle, heat and dust, exoticism and intoxicating optimism, all entangle in my memory. It's hard to believe that 35 years have passed. Coming back has been like entering my own Tamil Tardis.

Ampersand Travel (+44 20 7819 9770; www.ampersandtravel.com) offers a 10-night trip from £2,482 per person, with three nights at The Leela Palace in Chennai, two at Palais de Mahe in Pondicherry, two at Rajakkad Estate in Dindigul, one at Taj Gateway in Madurai and two at Visalam in Chettinad, including flights, private car, private guides and breakfast



# THE GOD OF

Rome likes to flaunt its glory with grand gestures, but its true character lies in the hidden details.



# SMALL THINGS

Long-time local lee marshall shares his favourite little wonders. Photographs by francesco lagnese



SLEEP

# Antique-stuffed retreat

ARCO DEI TOLOMEI GUEST HOUSE Could this be the city's most elegant B&B? It's certainly one of the best located, on a little cobbled piazza in Trastevere. Owners Marco and Gianna Fè d'Ostiani are passionate about art and antiques, and pieces from their collection are dotted about the six stylish and busy bedrooms in what feels like the apartment of a cultured Roman uncle and aunt. Two of the rooms have little outside terraces, and if Marco's indepth knowledge of the city doesn't suffice, there are plenty of books about Rome to browse through. Breakfast is a highlight, thanks to the cakes baked daily by ever-smiling housekeeper Jocelyn. Via dell'Arco de'Tolomei 27 (www.bbarcodeitolomei.com). Doubles from about £100

TIPPLE

# lea time among the statues

CAFFE CANOVA TADOLINI If Mr Casaubon, the dried-up old anti-hero of George Eliot's Middlemarch, had an ounce of fun in him, he might have taken his honeymooning bride Dorothea for a pot of Earl Grey at this mad café-restaurant on artsy via del Babuino. It began life in 1818 as a sculpture studio where Adamo Tadolini, the most gifted of genius Antonio Canova's pupils, worked on il maestro's hand-me-down jobs. The workshop stayed in the Tadolini family for another four generations. Today huge models of mounted emperors, demure goddesses, heroes, heads of state and random plaster limbs, nailed to the walls, hang over tables in the deliciously decadent rooms. Via del Babuino 150A/B (+39 06 3211 0702)



SEE

# The quirkiest little museum in town

CASA MUSEO GIORGIO DE CHIRICO In a residential palazzo on elegant Piazza di Spagna lies one of Rome's best-kept secrets: a house-museum in the apartment where the metaphysical painter de Chirico, known for his surreal deserted cityscapes, lived for 30 years with his wife Isabella until he died in 1978. Little has changed in his comfortably bourgeois home since then, apart from the arrangement of his paintings and sketches, which give an excellent overview of his long career. Upstairs is a gloriously cluttered studio. Look behind the easel and you'll see a coral horn, a horseshoe and other good luck charms that belonged to the superstitious artist. 31 Piazza di Spagna (www.fondazionedechirico.org)

PLAY

# Hurly-burly local haunt

BAR DEL FICO It's like a scene from a Fellini film. In the piazza outside this bar, day and night, the kind of grizzled old guys you'd expect to see cursing their bad luck in a betting shop sit playing chess on a couple of trestle tables as spectators make sarcastic comments in broad dialect. The proletarian players were here before historic del Fico emerged from a makeover in 2010 and the equally weathered shabby-chic bar, with its pared-back lunch menu of Roman specialities such as *rigatoni alla gricia*, is a fine place to flop when art and history are hurting your head. Around the corner is the evening-only restaurant of the same name, where grilled steaks take star billing. *Piazza del Fico 26 (www.bardelfico.com)*. About £60 for two



# HANG OUT

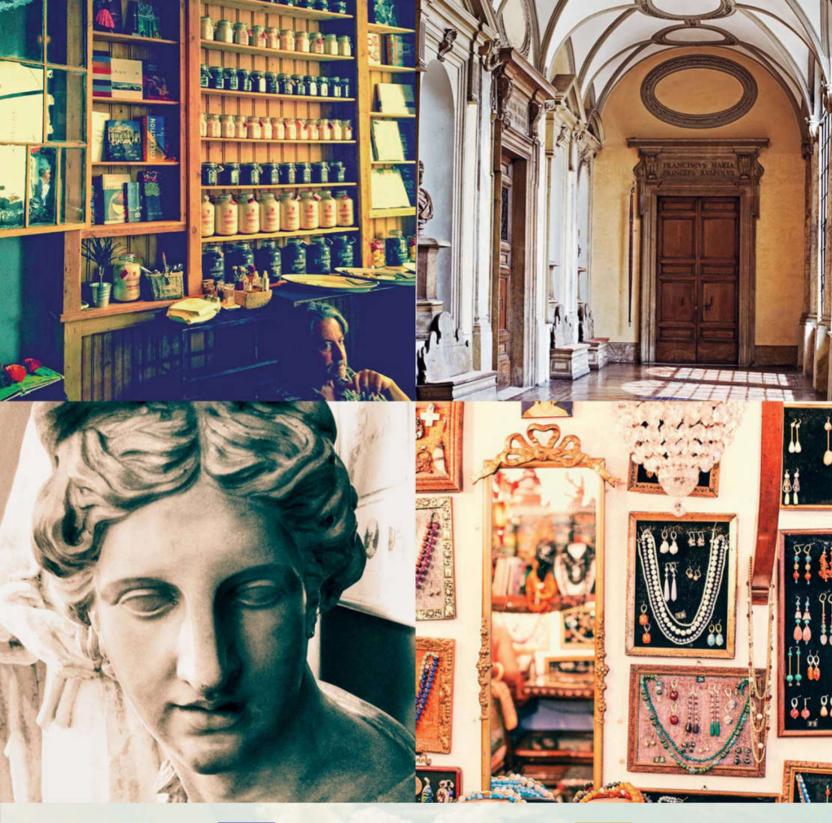
# Highly polished buzzy brasserie

CAFFE PROPAGANDA Sure, it's a concept bistro rather than a family-run trattoria, but this novelty a lion's roar from the Colosseum is, for the moment, a welcoming one-off rather than part of a franchise. The model is the Parisian bistro, or rather an idea of Paris, with Napoleonic chandeliers alongside black bentwood chairs and a vintage zinc bar counter. But in a city where complacency too often trumps quality, it's refreshing to eat in a place where you know the service will be efficient, the cocktails spot-on, the atmosphere appealing and the food excellent. The battuta di spada (swordfish) with ricotta mousse and salmoriglio sauce is delicious. Via Claudia 15 (www.caffepropaganda.it). About £60 for two



Architectural rebel

SAN CARLO ALLE QUATTRO FONTANE In the 1630s, for his first independent commission – a church and monastery for the Spanish Trinitarian order – architect Francesco Borromini had to work with a tiny site, not much bigger than the footprint of one of the piers that holds up the dome of St Peter's. He ran with the remit to deliver a masterpiece, centring on a church around a lozenge pattern rather than the traditional cross plan. Borromini traced a convex and concave line that creates the illusion of continuous movement. Viewed from the pews, the oval dome above appears to float on a bed of light. The design was immediately recognised as revolutionary; he was the Frank Gehry of the baroque. *Via del Quirinale* 



SHOP

# Offbeat design destination

VIA DEL BOSCHETTO This cobbled lane in the *centro storico*'s boho-chic Monti district is a poster boy for the charms of small-scale Rome. Not just because of its size, but because the shops, wine bars and restaurants that line it are almost without exception quirky and fascinating, with not a single brand among them. Highlights include the fashion boutique of Danish designer Tina Sondergaard at number 1D; the delightful shop La Porta de Safi of multi-tasking artist, sculptress, illustrator and furniture designer Luisa Eboli at number 6; one of Rome's great wine bars, La Barrique, at number 41; and, at number 35, Perlei, which showcases the fresh and kooky creations of Peruvian jeweller Kely Paucar.

EAT

# Next-generation trattoria

SMOL These pint-sized premises in the smart Parioli district, all wooden peasant tables and whitewashed walls enlivened by a few contemporary canvases, once housed Michelin-starred restaurant All'Oro, whose chef Riccardo di Giacinto moved to the First Luxury Art Hotel in 2012. They've since been taken over by his former kitchen-mates, who make up for the lack of space with their friendly demeanour and a creative cuisine that is grounded in reality. Dishes include *tagliolini* with hare sauce, juniper berries and sun-dried tomatoes, which hits a perfect balance between tradition and experiment. Prices are reasonable for an area that is the Chelsea of Rome. *Via Eleonora Duse 1E (+39 06 8068 7178)*. *About £60 for two* 



# REFUEL

# All-day post-shopping pitstop

LA VI The hip reclaiming of the previously rather dull streets around the Mausoleum of Augustus, to the west of via del Corso, continues apace with this multi-purpose restaurant, cookshop, bookshop, takeaway and cocktail bar with its Belle-Epoque-meets-Soho-loft decor. Through the day, LA VI (that's latteria e vineria or 'milk and wine bar') morphs from cheery lunchtime haunt for local office workers and clued-in visitors to evening aperitivo hangout and romantic dinner spot. The lunch buffet of pastas, salads and cold cuts at a low-cost €13 ensures a good and varied crowd, but in the evening things are more fashionista, with caviar and Champagne on the menu. Via Tomacelli 22 (www.la-vi.it). About £55 for two

# LICK

# Gelato for purists

NEVE DI LATTE This gourmet gelateria right behind Zaha Hadid's impressive MAXXI gallery was nominated Italy's best ice-cream emporium on Dissapore, a popular Italian food blog. Snow of Milk, as it translates, fields a relatively modest 20 flavours and avoids the weirder ones that are becoming all the rage – the single exception being a superb balsamic vinegar, based on an intense, 25-year-old traditional *aceto di Modena*. Otherwise there's the standard selection, including chocolate, coffee and strictly seasonal fruits. What dazzles is the quality of the ingredients, which include Amedei chocolate and biodynamic Bavarian milk, and the intense authenticity of the flavours. *Via Luigi Polletti* 6



SLEEP

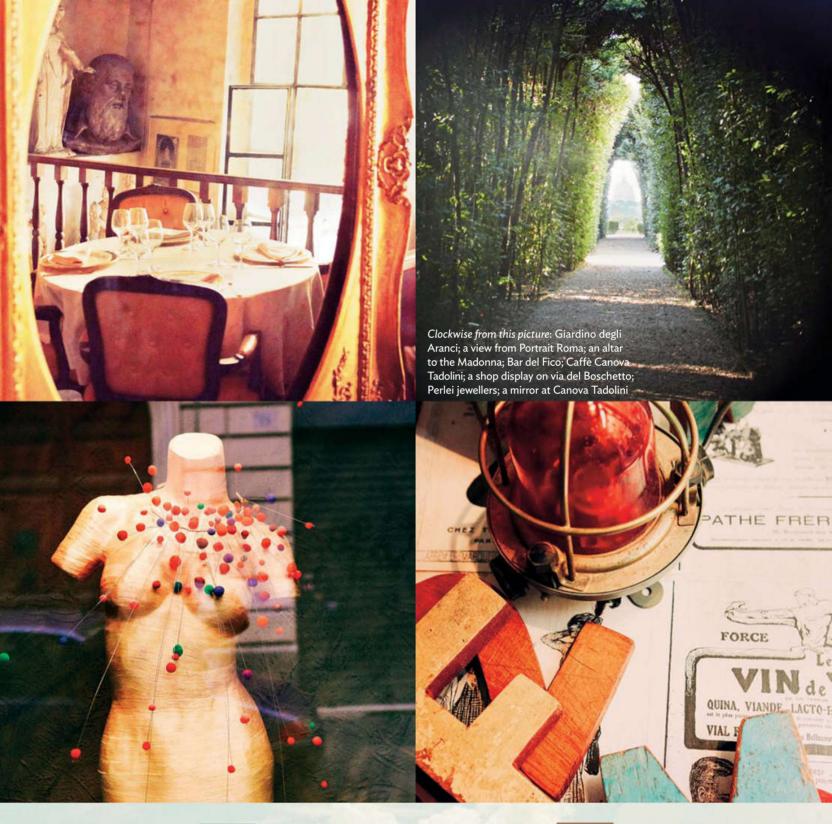
# Over-the-top one-bedroom bolthole

RESIDENZA NAPOLEONE III Want to live like a princess in Rome? Then live with a princess. Principessa Letizia Ruspoli, who's delightfully unpretentious, has opened up a three-room (but one-bedroom) suite in her central palazzo to guests, its name a tribute to France's last emperor, who stayed here. The design is jaw-dropping antique opulence, as if you just walked onto the set of Visconti's *The Leopard*. Amid the candelabras, gilded busts, marquetry desks and canopied beds are some surprises, like the two hinged oil paintings that swing back in true James Bond style to reveal, in one case, a plasma TV, and in the other, a tiny bathroom. *Via Fontanella Borghese* 56 (www.residenzanapoleone.com). From about £990 per night

SIP

# Artisan brews and no-frills food

NO AU That's 'know-how' said with a strong Italian accent. One thing this laid-back, jazzily bohemian bar-diner not far from Piazza Navona knows is how to source some of Italy's best new craft beers (though there are also interesting wines from smaller producers). It also knows where to find organic, Slow Food-inspired ingredients, including Piedmontese goats' cheese, prosciuttos and salamis. Given the excellence of the raw materials, the chef wisely chooses to fiddle with them as little as possible, so fresh cuttlefish, for example, is simply cut into strips and ironed. Decidedly sleepy at lunchtime, the place livens up from 7pm. *Piazza di Montevecchio* 16A (+39 06 4565 2770). *About* £35 for two



# SLEEP

# Front row at the Colosseum

PALAZZO MANFREDI An unbeatable location (it's built on top of Domitian's first-century AD gladiatorial training school), great design, top-notch service and Rome's most scenic restaurant and breakfast roof terrace mark this 14-room townhouse hotel out from the *centro storico* pack. The deluxe and master bedrooms and four suites have unobstructed views of the Colosseum, and others overlook Colle Oppio Park. The decor is stylish, reassuringly solid (oak parquet floors, black marble sinks) but with just a touch of glam in the occasional splashy colour combination or gold lamp. *Via Labicana 125 (www.palazzo manfredi.com)*. *Doubles from about £165* 

# STROLL

# Arty old-world street scene

VIA MARGUTTA Even in the late-summer heat, as soon as you turn the corner into this cool, cobbled street, the thermometer seems to drop to a more civilised level. Until well into the *dolce vita* years, this lane of pastel palazzos draped with wisteria in the artists' quarter north of the Spanish Steps was full of artisan workshops. Today, only a handful survive, in among the art galleries and antique shops that now line the alley. One is the marvellously cluttered Bottega del Marmoraro at number 53B, where former architect Sandro Fiorentini carries on the cave-of-wonders marble workshop founded by his father. Nearby, at number 51, is the courtyard where Gregory Peck's bohemian bachelor pad was located in *Roman Holiday*.



# GRAZE

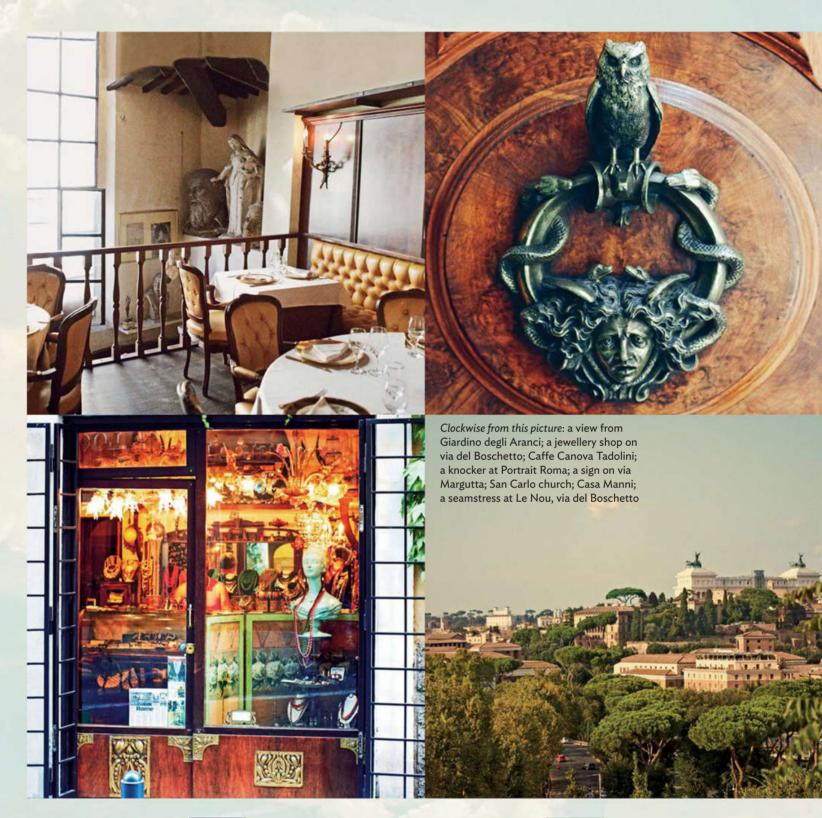
# Serious foodie fix

ROSCIOLI Three Italian institutions – the gourmet deli, the *enoteca* (wine bar) and the family-run restaurant – are combined in this temple to food excellence, set up by Alessandro Roscioli, scion of a multi-generational Roman bakery clan. The deli counter beckons on the left as you walk in, with great legs of Parma ham hanging above it like interrogation lamps. Beyond are the tables, efficiently crammed into a barrel-vaulted space lined with interesting bottles. The vibe is cultured, and the menu focuses on top-quality ingredients such as Paolo Parisi eggs, Verrigni spaghetti and chillies from the island of Vulcano, which are spelled out like A-list stars. *Via dei Giubbonari 21 (www.salumeriaroscioli.com)*. *About £70 for two* 

# SLEEP

# Chic charmer for the fashion set

PORTRAIT ROMA This boutique hotel in the heart of the fashion shopping triangle is, alongside Portrait Firenze, the most successful of designer Michele Bönan's seven conjuring acts for the Ferragamo-owned Lungarno group. A master of fabrics, textures and colour-matching, he channels the spirit of the 1960s while keeping the look of the 14 suites fresh and modern. But it's the details that give this place the edge over its luxury rivals. The concierges eat incognito in the restaurants they recommend, there's an iPad in each room so you can book a personal shopper, for example, and a suave roof terrace with opera-box view of the Spanish Steps. *Via Bocca di Leone 23 (www.lungarnocollection.com). Suites from about £320* 



# SLEEP

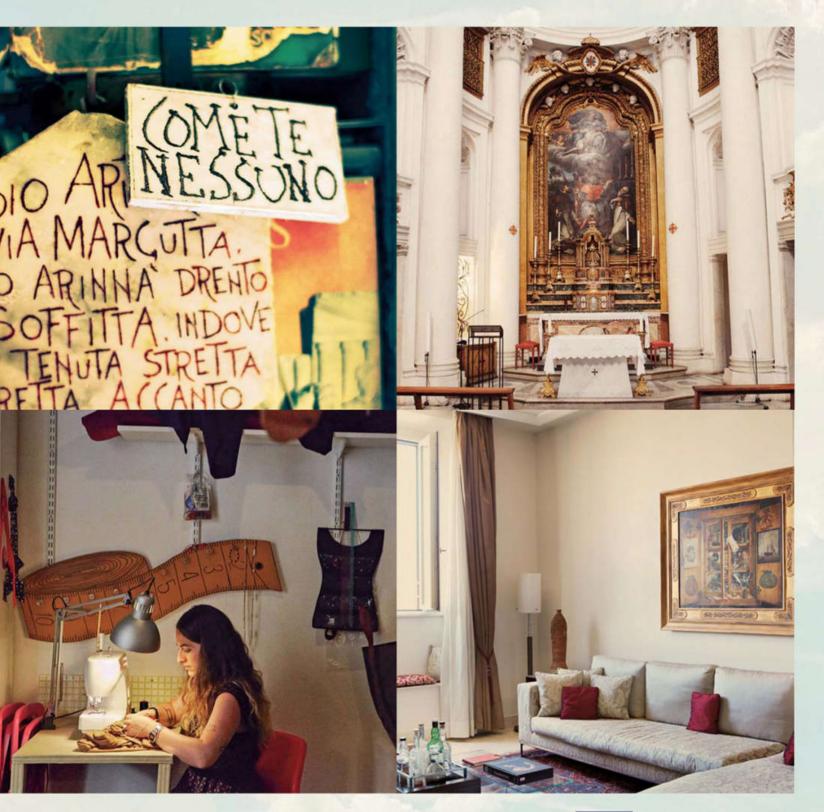
# Quietly smart old-town beauty

RELAIS GIULIA Via Giuila was laid out under Pope Julius II, the patron of Michelangelo, as an elegant Renaissance thoroughfare in a city that was still essentially a medieval warren. The palazzo that houses this cool 13-room retreat was built for the Farnese family in the mid-16th century, and some of the rooms still bear traces of original frescoes. The style is sparse but not cold, the mostly white-and-cream colour scheme and designer lights mellowed by warm parquet floors, exposed beams and views over rooftops from several rooms, including lovely number 503. There's a shady secluded courtyard for daytime postcard writing and evening aperitivi. Via Giulia 93 (www.relaisgiulia.it). Doubles from about £115

# FEAST

# Cosy space with big flavours

MARZAPANE This urban bistro in the increasingly buzzy neighbourhood around the MACRO contemporary art gallery was really tiny – and always full – until it expanded next door last year. The result is a more relaxed atmosphere than before: a warm, two-level space with a faintly Scandi feel, in earthy tones of copper, terracotta and natural wood but with a slick edge. It's a perfect setting for Spanish chef Alba Esteve Ruiz, who pushes out the Mediterranean flavour boat with dishes such as suckling pig with Jerusalem artichoke, strawberry emulsion, coffee dust and raspberry reduction (yes, that's one dish). It's also very good value for money. Via Velletri 39 (www.marzapaneroma.com). About £55 for two



SEE

# The city's cutest fountain

FONTANA DELLE TARTARUGHE The Turtle Fountain is only a 10-minute walk from its Trevi cousin, but it seems to belong to a different world. Where the Trevi struts and thunders, the Turtle, which dates from the 1580s, charms and gurgles. For the Ancient Rome-inspired basin sculptor Taddeo Landini was asked to create the four smiling bronze boys who rest their feet on water-spouting dolphins. The turtles that the boys appear to be helping as they scramble into the upper bowl are later touches – added around 80 years afterwards, perhaps by Bernini. This area has been the hub of Jewish Rome since the Middle Ages, and the kosher bakery in nearby Portico d'Ottavia is known for its ricotta-and-sour-cherry pie. *Piazza Mattei* 

SLEEP

# Brilliantly bespoke crashpad

CASA MANNI So you want where you're staying to be right in the centre of Rome and to be utterly stylish. But you don't want to see other people at breakfast; in fact, you don't want to see other people at all. It would be nice, however, to have a few of the hotel perks: like the phone number of an efficient concierge, Wi-Fi that works and, perhaps, a good wine cellar. What you need is Casa Manni, an apartment for two that's the brainchild of former film director Armando Manni. The honesty bar is actually a climate-controlled fridge stocked with bottles that you order when booking. And if you want a hot new chef to come and cook supper – no problem. Via di Pietra 70 (www.casamanni.com). From about £455 a night



# PHOTOGRAPH: SCOTT MCDERMOTT/CORBIS OUTLINE

# AROUND THE WORLD WITH KEVIN BACON

While researching his *Footloose* role the actor was bullied by high-school students but went on to have such a prolific career that it spawned the Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon party game

#### Where have you just come back from?

Los Angeles. I finally broke down and embraced the California thing and got a little house there with my wife [Kyra Sedgwick]. Our kids aren't in school any more, so we are truly bi-coastal now and it almost feels like a vacation. It's on the edge of a big municipal park so we do a lot of hiking, though not in Runyon Canyon Park, which I call Dog Shit Canyon.

# Where have you felt happiest?

New York City. I grew up in Philadelphia, but when I got to New York, it put me at ease and made me feel safe. I may have a vagabond lifestyle, but I really do like to be at home. Now we've discovered LA, and we also have a beautiful place in north-western Connecticut.

#### Name a place that's lived up to the hype

It took me until my forties to spend time in London, and I love it. I can walk everywhere and it's got a modern energy combined with all that history.

#### And one that least lived up to the hype

Cabo San Lucas. It was crowded and dusty. I worked with a guy in the 1980s who told me, 'You have to go. I've found this sleepy fishing village where there are abandoned beaches and the most amazing cheap Mexican food and tequila.' But I didn't go until 20 years later, and it wasn't how it had been pitched.

#### Which is your favourite city and why?

I spent a month in Bangkok for work. It's such a crazy place, very intense, and I love Thai people. I dug it a lot.

#### Which is your road most travelled?

The Downtown C train in New York. I take the subway pretty much every day; it's my train so I'm on it a lot. Somebody told me there's a website with pictures of me taken on the train, which I think is pretty rude actually!

#### What do you pack first?

T-shirts. I'm a really, really spartan packer. My wife always says to me, 'Under-packing is a hollow virtue', but I never check baggage. Never. The bag is on the floor, I stand by the underwear drawer and I count the days I need. I'm not too much of a clothes horse, so I pack maybe two pairs of jeans, one black and one blue, and then I count everything else and that's it. I'm done.

#### Describe your favourite view

Looking across the dining-room table at my wife and kids. I've seen a lot of views, but that's the one that really gets me.

#### 'I know this great little place...'

I'll tell you one that's really unusual. It's in Los Feliz, in LA, and it's a restaurant... I hesitate to tell you because it's our local joint and it's always empty and that's why I love it, but the food is delicious. It's called Puran's.

# 'I'M A SPARTAN PACKER. I STAND BY THE UNDERWEAR DRAWER AND COUNT THE DAYS I NEED'

#### Describe a childhood-holiday memory

We used to go to the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York where there are beautiful lakes and mountains. The place we stayed had no electricity and you still can't get cell-phone reception. It's very remote. I suppose I got into hiking back then. When you walk you see things you just don't see from a powered vehicle.

#### First holiday without your parents?

I guess the big one was Italy in my early twenties. It was my first trip to Europe and it was great. I remember we landed in Rome and got a hire car to drive into the city. That was a bad idea. Just trying to find the signs! But then we got there and it blew my mind.

# Describe a holiday disaster

When I got married, my wife and I had a cool honeymoon planned. The Orient Express was going to be part of it, and we were going to go to all these different places – Scotland, Ireland, Italy – but she was booked in for a movie called *Born on the Fourth of July* and the schedule changed. So what was supposed to be a two-week trip was knocked back to about four days. In the end we went to Positano and had a magical time. My son was conceived there, so it turned out great.

#### The smartest hotel you've stayed in?

The Belmond Hotel Cipriani in Venice is pretty good and because it's on an island you can leave the insanity of the city behind and everything is chilled.

### Sightseeing or sun lounger?

There was a time when I would hang out on the beach, but that doesn't really jazz me any more. When my kids were little we used to go to Anguilla year after year. I still love it, but when they got older we decided to do more adventuring; places like the Galápagos Islands, Costa Rica, Belize and Thailand. I tend to like that kind of vacation better.

### Ever taken anything from a hotel room?

I'm pretty good. I'll take a little sewing kit if I need one, or some shampoo, but I've never walked out with a TV.

## What's your guilty pleasure?

Airline food. Although there was a big article in *The New York Times* about how they tested some and there is a dangerous amount of bacteria in there...

# What would you like in your mini-bar?

Tequila. And it doesn't happen often.

#### Most regrettable holiday souvenir?

Rum. It's one of those drinks you think you like on vacation, and then you get home and it just gives you heartburn.

# How do you relax?

I always take a small travel guitar with me. I just love to sit around and play a little.

Kevin Bacon was speaking to Francesca Babb. He stars in 'Black Mass', out in cinemas in November

# **IN BRITAIN**





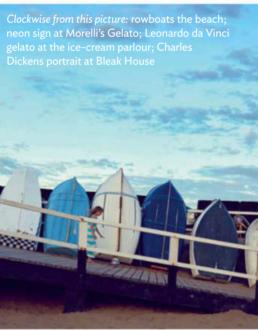
# **IN BRITAIN**











proper beach has sand. I don't hold with this newfangled notion that shingle will do. You can keep Whitstable with its overpriced seafood and pebbles! Continue east and you will reach Broadstairs with its variety of beautiful beaches. Here you can make an elaborate sandcastle and eat the best ice cream in the world; Broadstairs has been my bolthole for the past decade. Sitting in Morelli's Gelato parlour, looking out to sea through the window lit by an old neon sign and watching the sun go down, still makes my brain fizz with pleasure. Light bypasses reason in the end and we all need it. Obviously I was not the first to have this epiphany: Turner talked of 'the loveliest skies in Europe' and it is this combination of sandy bays and vast Kentish skies that makes it special. I rent a beach hut here and I can honestly say that no other property in my life has given me such happiness.

Many have been charmed by this little town, among them Queen Victoria and Charles Dickens, who holidayed here every summer for 22 years and wrote most of *David Copperfield* in Bleak House (more of which later). But Broadstairs is in fact full of stories and intrigue that will reveal themselves as you get to know it. Or it can simply be an easy seaside outing if that's what you're looking for. As you walk down the hill to the sea from the station – it's an hour-and-20-minute train journey from London's St Pancras – there's Viking Bay with its clifftop promenade, its perfect curve, and a lift for those with buggies and wheelchairs. Breathe in those big skies. All aglow. Relax.

# WHERE TO STAY

## LANDLADY OF COOL

No longer the secret it once was, **Belvidere Place** 

is where you may bump into a supermodel, a restaurateur or just someone who needs time 'to get their head together man'. It's run by the extraordinary Jilly Sharpe, often to be seen with a brolly and leather Stetson, and the kind of person who manages to keep two fires burning at once while pouring a quick sharpener and dispensing advice on where to eat. All this in exquisitely cosy surroundings and with terrific breakfasts too. Jilly is full of warmth but also senses if you want to be left alone, which is how a great landlady should be - she is truly one of the best. There are several other B&Bs in the area, and some have that slightly intrusive, old-fashioned vibe. But Copperfields is nice and also eco-friendly. Everything is locally sourced and they cater for vegetarians. I find **The Royal Albion** hotel overpriced for what's on offer, but you don't have to stay there to have a drink on its terrace, which is bliss. And there are tons of self-catering options for families, from tiny cottages to houses that sleep up to 10 people (try www.owndersdirect.co.uk).

# WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

# ICE ICE BABY

Everyone loves **Morelli's Gelato**. So much so that there are branches in

Kuwait and Dallas, and you can even buy the stuff in Harrods. But the original is in Broadstairs; Giuseppe Morelli opened it in 1932. It has a soda fountain, Formica table-tops, Lloyd Loom chairs and fantastic coffee. Go for the pistachio ice cream; the nuts are sourced from Sicily – the real deal. They also serve enormous sundaes, banana boats and Leonardo da Vinci palettes of coloured gelato. And there's a juke box. Everyone's a kid at Morelli's.

#### **RUB-A-DUB DUB**

Be aware: restaurants get booked up fast over the weekends. For good grown-up food there is **Wyatt and Jones**, which is worth a visit for the anchovy toast alone. There are also oysters here, and the chefs will deep-fry them if that is your heart's desire. **Paulo's Kitchen** is really friendly and has fun mini-burgers. **Posillipo** is an old-fashioned Italian and is always busy;



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# THIS MONTH'S AMAZING DEALS FOR SUBSCRIBERS



# **THEATRE TREAT**

Enjoy over 25% off Green Day's critically-acclaimed explosive, award-winning Broadway musical American Idiot (programme included), starring X Factor finalist Amelia Lily. This story of three boyhood friends in a post 9/11 world features hit songs from Green Day's 2004 Grammy award-winning, multiplatinum album. To book tickets for £50 (reduced from £65) call 020 7836 8463 or go online (americanidiotwestend.com) and quote 'TRAVELLER'. Valid for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday performances until 24.10.2015. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.



# **DAY AT** THE RACES

Racegoers can take advantage of a special 33% discount on gate price tickets for The Investec Ladies Day at Epsom Downs on 03.06.16. Book a group of four and receive a free bottle of Pannier champagne. Join elegant racegoers who gather for this classic day, with the fashionable competing to win the much sought after 'Best Dressed Lady' title. To book, visit epsomderby.co.uk and enter the code CONDE. Book between 01.09.15-31.12.15. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.



# WELLBEING **BOOTCAMP**

Rejuvenate your mind and body in this idyllic country retreat in the heart of Kent. Enjoy tailored exercises with one of London's top personal trainers in the enchanting woodland and eat spectacularly in this historic hall house. This is a perfect bootcamp for wellbeing that caters for all levels for a healthy approach to lifestyle change. From £375 for the weekend, CNT readers will get a free personal training session or a 'Fitness & Food' consultation.  $To book \, email \, in fo@green farm fitness. co.uk \, and \,$ quote 'Conde Nast Traveller'. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.

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➤ it has tables outside too. Samworth & Mee serves a very good skate in brown butter and a great crab sandwich. But let's face facts: the best meal you are going to have by the seaside is fish and chips, fresh air and all. My family always argues over which is the best chippie in town, and my money is on Fish Inn. The portions are massive, but you know you'll manage somehow.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT

If it's sunny – and Broadstairs enjoys its own micro-climate – get a jug of Pimm's at **The Pavilion** and sit outside, right on the beach. **The Tartar Frigate** by the harbour is a proper 18th-century pub too. But I always head to **The Chapel**, a bar that was an old bookshop that was an old chapel. I love that I can sit drinking local ales and cider, or even rhubarb vodka, in a fantastic setting. It's a bit *Fawlty Towers*, and I have been here when a chandelier nearly fell from the ceiling. And whatever

they say is on the menu very often isn't. But it doesn't matter. Local musicians come in and play, and it's odd, charming and does its own thing. Which to me is exactly what Broadstairs is all about.

WHAT TO SEE & DO

# BAY CITY ROLLERS There is a glorious sweep

There is a glorious sweep of bays at Broadstairs. The main one is **Viking Bay**,

with its striking blue-and-yellow beach huts. Dickens' Bleak House stands at one end and there's a pier where you can eat jellied eels and crayfish tails. This is a real family beach. When the tide goes out, a large, square rock pool appears for those of us who like to mess about crabbing. In high season there are trampolines and rides for small children. It's true bucket-and-spade territory. Surf- and belly-boards are all available for hire. I have seen people produce an entire three-course feast in their beach huts here. They do it for the annual Beach

Hut of the Year competition that I have inexplicably never won. If you want something quieter, walk around the corner to Louisa Bay. Get a bacon sandwich from the rocking Louisa Bay Café and enjoying the sunset view. If you want something posher, they do a nice Greek salad. In the opposite direction is Stone Bay. It's submerged at high tide, so at such times head to Joss Bay, which has a surf school. These aren't big Atlantic swells, so it's a good place to learn. And don't miss the caves where smugglers once hid their treasure. Broadstairs was built on that money. **Botany Bay** is the wildest of the bunch. It's a gem with its chalk stalks, rock pools and fossils. There is a lovely little kiosk, but be warned: at high tide both ends of the beach are cut off. When you are totally beached out, go to the Botany Bay Tea Gardens. It's in a beautiful, flint-walled oasis full of fragrant honevsuckle and they serve still-warm bread and scones. >

# enchanting tamil nadu \*

# WHERE HISTORY MEETS FOREVER



Shore Temple - Overlooking the shore of the Bay of Bengal, this piece of sculptural excellence stands as an icon of Mamallapuram.



Brihadeeshwara Temple, Thanjavur -A temple tower with amazing architectural excellence.



Darasuram - A profusion of sculpture heralding the renaissance of the times that were.



Gangai Konda Cholapuram -Another masterpiece of Chola Empire.



Nilgiris - A heritage train that continues to steam the hills with its merry whistle.

Tamilnadu with its five World heritage attractions is probably the best place to discover the history of time.



## **Tamil Nadu Tourism**

Commissionerate of Tourism, Tamil Nadu Tourism Complex, No. 2, Wallajah Road, Chennai - 600 002.

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From left: The Chapel, a bookshop-bar; oysters at Wyatt and Jones restaurant; the sitting room at Belvidere Place

too. Queen Victoria spent her summers here as a child in **Pierremont Hall**, which is now a venue for the town's biannual food festivals in April and October.

➤ Try the cheesecake with extra cream or the lime-and-coconut cake and pick up some homemade pickles on the way out.

#### LOOP THE LOOP

Ditch the car and walk everywhere, and if you want to go to **Margate** – and you will for the Turner Contemporary – or to **Ramsgate**, jump on the **Thanet Loop bus**. They are regular and it's hard to get lost because, as the name suggests, they always come back to Broadstairs.

#### SILVER-SCREEN DREAMS

If the weather is not so great, or even if it is, go and see a movie at the little **Palace Cinema** on Harbour Street. It's Tardis-like and rarely more than a fiver to get in. It has Dolby Surround Sound now, although I've been when the projector broke down and also when the co-owner played the organ before the start of a film. Magic. Film buffs will fall in love with this one.

#### MUSIC TO THE EARS

I have not missed **Folk Week** for 10 years, and I'm someone who didn't even know they liked folk music. What I soon realised is that folk is a pretty elastic definition: I've seen everything from a Punjabi heavy-metal band to the glorious Bellowhead, and if you think Morris is all twee and floral, think again: some troupes are decked out like Kiss and have gone fully pagan. The summer festival means that pubs are rammed with musicians, some good, some bad, some indifferent, but my favourite thing is the ancient East Kent tradition of hooden horses, which the festival helps keep alive. People wear

scary wooden horse's heads atop sackcloth cloaks and snap at terrified children. This is said to go back to mumming and ancient rural traditions where hooden horses would appear with performers before the Winter Solstice asking for money to tide them over hard times. The horses would often be accompanied by a Betsy man (a man dressed as a woman). If I don't see a large bearded man dressed as a toddler in a frilly dress with bloomers, I feel my year is not complete.

#### LOCAL SUPERSTAR

Go on, find the **blue plaque** in Chandos Square that shows where animator and writer Oliver Postgate – creator of the much-loved Bagpuss – used to live.

#### **HOLE IN ONE**

If you are tired of mini-golf, you are tired of life. Go to **Lillyputt**. Or there is an actual golf course at **North Foreland**.

#### **DICKENS AND VICTORIA**

They are everywhere. Charles Dickens called Broadstairs 'our English watering hole' and was fascinated by the constantly changing seascapes. When he was staying at **Bleak House**, he referred to his study as his 'airy nest' and you can see it at what is, frankly, an odd visitors' attraction, or pop into the quaint little **Dickens House Museum** on the seafront. During the week-long annual **Dickens Festival** in June, the town is full of people in Victorian dress and scholars from all over Europe. If this kind of thing floats your boat, crinoline up. Some gentlemen do



#### DO IT YOURSELF

BELVIDERE PLACE

If you have gone for self-catering and arrive late, don't worry, there

is a Co-op on the High Street that's open until 11pm. Once settled in, it's not hard to feed yourself well: get fish from Fruits de Mer; meat from local farms at the excellent Butcher of Brogdale, and fruit and veg from Hinge of London down towards the beach. Nothing beats Kentish asparagus and strawberries in season.

#### THE COLLECTIBLES

There's a thin line between vintage, charity-shop tat and genuine antiques, and nowhere is the line thinner than in Broadstairs. Potter and ye shall find! But what you really need is a Teddy Bear Hospital and there's one at the marvellous Bee Antiques. It will mend any stuffed toy and even restored my old leather ET that had seen better days. Suzanne's is a proper old-fashioned gift shop, so buy your seashells, lucky-dips and even whoopee cushions here. Gemset is rammed full of odd things you never knew you needed and collectors' items such as Wyoming fossilised fish, huge crystals, sharks' teeth, bits of meteorite and antiquities of the genuine kind, from Roman oil lamps to flint tools from 7,500 BC. Astonishing. They can even help organise rock-pool and fossil-guided walks.





Clockwise from top: View from the Earl Suite; The Baron Suite; By the Oasis pool without booking into Mulia Spa, a masterclass in relaxation and rejuvenation. World-class service and meticulous attention to detail top The Mulia experience off, cementing this superexclusive hideaway onto our Bali books. Hot, hot, hot for 2015.

#### ROMANTIC GETAWAY

Couples reserving the romantic getaway package (a minimum of three nights in the beachfront suites at The Mulia) will be treated to the finest champagne and caviar, a pampering session at Mulia Spa and dinner for two under the stars at Soleil. The concierge will also arrange exclusive airport transfers.

For further information call +62 361 302 777, email reservation@themulia.com or visit themulia.com

ulia Resort at Nusa Dua opened in 2013 and promptly scooped number one Beach Resort in the world, voted by readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* (US). This award-winning complex spread over 33 acres and dotted with sculptures, swimming pools and exotic flowers, is actually three properties in one. Mulia Resort is the big, bold centerpiece, complemented by two smaller options, The Mulia and Mulia Villas. It is The Mulia that couples have immediately been drawn to, a boutique all-suite hotel that oozes style and serenity.

Bang on the beachfront, The Mulia is just a stone's throw from the Indian Ocean. The one- and two-bedroom suites (111 in total) boast brilliant views; each is enormous with a spacious living area, huge bedroom and private patio complete with Jacuzzi. Add in the utmost privacy, personal butler service

and all the latest gadgets, it's no wonder this new kid on the beach is getting rave reviews. What we love most is the hotel's sleek look and stylish vibe. Floor-to-ceiling glass windows feature pretty much throughout, enhancing the already apparent sense of space while seamlessly blending interior with exterior. The infinity pool continues the flow, this time onto a one-kilometre stretch of blinding-white sand. Outside this tropical haven, guests have unlimited access to Mulia Resort's facilities. There's exceptional dining at the Japanese-style Edogin, wonderful fresh dishes at the Mediterranean-influenced Soleil and authentic Indonesian at The Cafe. And no stay here would be complete



# HEIGHT of indulgence

St Moritz, Switzerland's grande dame of white winters, might be the world's oldest winter resort at 151 years young but she can rock with the best of them. Nine fabulous ski areas, the legendary Cresta Run, snow polo, swanky hotels, restaurants and boutiques galore mean St Moritz is still queen of the snowy, glamorous and unashamedly sybaritic good life...





t all started from humble beginnings: the River Inn bubbled up tens of thousands of years ago high in the mountains of eastern Switzerland and carved out a dramatic valley as it travelled towards the Danube. Locals named the valley *Engiadina*, meaning 'garden of the Inn' in their Rhaeto-Romance language. Today, the 'garden' is known as the Engadin and is Switzerland's largest nature reserve, a pristine environment of snow-capped peaks, dense forests, verdant meadows, mountain streams, natural springs and lakes.

#### CHAMPAGNE CLIMATE

For centuries, visitors have travelled into the Engadin to reach St Moritz, which lies on the shores of one of the lakes fed by the Inn. Together with healing spring waters, St Moritz offered visitors a 'champagne climate' – not a reference to champagne-quaffing guests, but to the sparkling and invigorating climate of the Upper Engadin – and plenty of sunny days each year, making it the destination of choice for those seeking a restorative summer bolthole.

However, the enterprising owner of St Moritz's Kulm Hotel, Johannes Badrutt, changed everything in 1864. Badrutt wagered his British summer guests that a visit to his home town during the winter would be just as delightful; if not, he'd cover the cost of their holiday. He won the bet and within two years the Kulm (and most hotels in St Moritz) was fully booked with winter







Opposite page, main: Skier above the lake plateau at Corvatsch. Opposite page, hottom: Kulm Hotel St Moritz. This page clockwise from top left: Skiers above the frozen lake at Corviglia: St Moritz Gourmet Festival; Sun on the St Moritzersee lake Poster for FIS Alpine World Ski ampionships 2017; White Turf event. St Moritz

guests. In 1896, he confirmed St Moritz's destiny as the world's original luxury winter destination with the launch of his eponymous Palace. A global icon, Badrutt's Palace still towers above St Moritz lake today sporting fairytale turrets, old-school glam restaurants, star-studded bars and the infamous King's nightclub.

#### ALPINE RUNS

In the meantime, the ever playful Victorian Britons quickly adapted to the snow that blanketed the picturesque old town of St Moritz and its surrounding mountains. In place of Alpine walks and refreshing dips in the lake, they started skiing, curling and horse racing on snow. During the winter of 1884-85, British officers started the world's first bobsleigh track, the legendary Cresta Run, going on to found the prestigious St Moritz Tobogganing Club (SMTC) in 1887. Still very much in action today, the atmosphere at the Cresta remains quintessentially English and equally thrilling. Another of St Moritz's signature sporting gatherings is the annual White Turf skijoring event, which dates back to 1906. Against a backdrop of snow-covered mountains, the world's leading jockeys and racehorse owners gather to cheer on competitors as they speed across the frozen St Moritz lake on skis dragged by horses.

#### **INDULGENCE**

The majority of winter visitors to St Moritz follow in the footsteps of Badrutt's guests and include in a variety of sports, social engagements and shopping rather than 'just' skiing. However, for those here to ski,



there are 350km of pistes to explore across four large ski areas and five smaller, off-the-beaten-piste ones. All linked by free public transport, the award-winning terrain offer skiers of all levels diverse skiing, from gentle sun-drenched cruising runs to challenging off-piste itineraries. Not for nothing has St Moritz hosted two Winter Olympics – the world's finest and fastest have graced the fluid lines of Corviglia for decades and will do so again when St Moritz hosts its fifth Alpine World Ski Championships in 2017. Remarkably, you can enjoy this world-class skiing for under £25 a day if you take stay at the St Moritz's hotel and ski pass offer: simply spend two nights or more at any of the hotels participating in the scheme and you'll receive a CHF35 lift pass for each day you stay.

#### TO DINE FOR

But this wouldn't be St Moritz if it was all about hard skiing – with 64 mountain restaurants to choose from. there are ample opportunities to relax on a sunny terrace. You could go for a hearty rösti at the rustic Kuhstall (cowshed) on Corvatsch mountain or an indulgent Corviglia Snow (caviar on a 'piste' of mashed potatoes) at La Marmite. The latter is part of Swiss celebrity chef Reto Mathis's mountain empire a modernist, canary-yellow block perched on the 2,486 metre peak of Corviglia mountain comprising four restaurants and a bar. Mathis is also the man behind the annual St Moritz Gourmet Festival, a celebration of global cuisine that sees some of the world's finest chefs gather for a series of prestigious culinary events. The 23rd festival will take place in January 2016 with a focus on Japanese cuisine chopsticks at the ready!

Regardless of where you go and what you to do in St Moritz, you can wager that, just like those pioneering British guests of Johannes Badrutt, you'll want to return because, in St Moritz, exceptional is normal.







whip up BBQs of freshly caught fish, and organise sailing days or kids' camps at windsurfing hub Jibe City. But you can just as happily fend for yourself, and the Van Den Tweel supermarket has all the essentials for a picnic lunch: marinated tomatoes, amazing cheeses and rotisserie chickens. In the evenings head to Kite City, a food truck right by the sea, for zingy fish tacos. Bring fins and masks to drift around under the clear water first, then hang out on beachside beanbags to watch the sun sink. BOOK IT Sleeps eight. Seven nights' villa rental from about £2,250 (+599 7176424; www.pietboonbonaire.com)





### MAISONS AT AMANJENA, MARRAKECH

All Aman hotels come with certain expectations - of a hushed atmosphere, refined elegance, grown-up serenity - and this Ed Tuttle terracotta masterpiece is no exception. But that isn't to say smaller travellers aren't welcome too. And compared to the hurly-burly of Marrakech's medina, the space you get here is a much-needed antidote with its palms and olive trees, endless expanses of manicured grass for tearing around and petal-strewn tiled fountains for cooling hot little feet. The main, aquamarine-tiled pool has a huge shallow end for tentative swimmers, and it's impossible to get in anyone's way. There are tennis courts for late-afternoon knockabouts, a library to overwhelm even the most committed bookworm, cooking classes, donkey rides and babysitting when needed. And beyond the gates is the Sahara desert, for hiking, biking and sandy escapades on camelback. With its own 120ft heated swimming pool, the Al-Hamra mansion is the big-daddy villa to book. There are also six rose-tinted Maisons with open-plan living areas, children's rooms on the ground floor (with mini djellaba robes on the back of the doors and babouche slippers at the ends of the beds) and a master suite, dressing room and bathroom upstairs, containing straw sunhats and Havaianas for the adults. Two of these Moorishminimalist Maisons have garden courtyards where staff can set up family suppers under the minzah (pillared gazebo). Or head to the bar, find a sofa on the lawn and listen to the local musicians before dinner in the restaurant. The kids can run free while you unwind into the evening. BOOK IT Sleeps four. Scott Dunn (+44 20 8682 5080; www.scottdunn. com) offers seven nights in a Maison from £3,500 per person, including flights, transfers and breakfast

## SANDPIPER BEACH HOUSE AT JUMBY BAY, ANTIGUA

This private island is pretty much as close as a castaway hideout

can get to the baggage hall: three minutes in the car then seven on a boat across a fiercely bright turquoise strait. That transfer blasts away all airplane fogginess and deposits you on a warm wooden jetty. Over half of the 53 villas here are available to rent. There are some ultra-grand whoppers, all colonnades and marble, and some surprisingly low-key cottages last decorated in the 1980s. This winning beach house lies somewhere in between. It is crisp and fresh, and laidback enough that sandy footprints across floors and soggy bottoms on sofas won't give anyone cause for concern. The bleached wood, soaring ceilings, whirring fans and coral-print fabrics give the house a colonial feel with a dollop of Oka-style thrown in. All five bedrooms have mosquito-netted four-posters, headboards made from sea-bleached branches, funky local art to add colour and plantation shutters that let in a soft breeze at night. For daytime entertainment there's a lovely pool as well as a pool table, and masses of striped outdoor beds. The beach - with its starfish-filled shallows - is right at the end of the deck, and beyond the walls are 300 acres of roaming-around room for mini escapades to spy black-headed sheep grazing or blue bellied lizards basking on the sand. At night, roast marshmallows around the firepit after a supper cooked by your private chef, or toddle off to one of the three hotel restaurants (no need to take a wallet: it's all part of the deal). **BOOK IT** Sleeps 10. ITC Luxury Travel (+44 1244 355527; www.itcluxurytravel.co.uk) offers seven nights from £5,195 per person based on 10 adults sharing the Sandpiper Beach House, full board, including flights and transfers





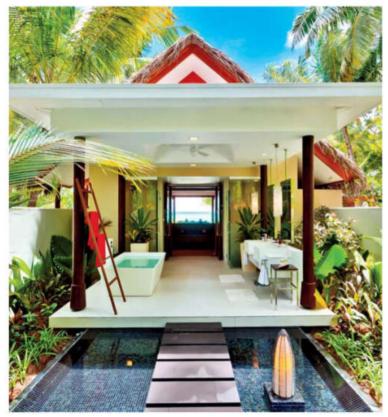


## RHODES COTTAGE AT BOSCHENDAL FARM, SOUTH AFRICA

For a dose of post-safari farm living, the Sir Herbert Baker-designed house on the 2,200-hectare Boschendal estate is a knockout. It comes with a dollop of Cape history, a live-in housekeeper called Jones, bicycles and two swimming pools - one of which is an eco-pool, which means the kids can paddle with tadpoles. The whitewashed Cape Dutch cottage was originally built as a bolthole for Cecil John Rhodes, who revived the vineyards and planted deciduous fruit orchards 120 years ago, and the comfy, countryhouse vibe remains intact with floral and ticking fabrics, solid indigenous-wood antiques and an Arts and Craft influence. A puttering tractor may mean an early wake-up, but there's so much to do before the fierce South African heat settles in: hiking and mountain-biking, pony rides, trout fishing, picnics, spa treatments and wine tasting, all kicked off with a slap-up breakfast served on the veranda. While it's cheery to head down to the farmshop and deli to pick up biodynamic provisions for a family supper, with a little advance warning Jones can sort pasture-fed Black Angus steaks on the barbecue or a basket of roast organic chicken and salads to eat on the lawn. Wash it down with sparkling wine from the estate or a bottle of Cecil John Reserve Shiraz. For a blow-out lunch, head to the Werf Restaurant in the old cellar, where farm-to-table disciple Christiaan Campbell conjures up pretty plates in front of your eyes. Boschendal sits beneath the towering Simonsberg peak in the Drakenstein Valley, halfway between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, with day-tripping possibilities in all directions, and the excitements of Cape Town are just a 45-minute car-ride away, too.

BOOK IT Sleeps eight adults and two children. Seven nights' villa rental from about £3,525 (+27 21 870 4290; www.boschendal.com)





## BEACH PAVILION AT PER AQUUM NIYAMA, MALDIVES

At this high-octane retreat, a 45-minute seaplane ride from Malé over atolls of pancake-batter-drop islands, there is endless activity in the water: surfing, paddle-boarding, kitesurfing, kayaking and marine expeditions. Swimmers can snorkel the cultivated trail close to shore or plant a baby coral among nurseries teeming with sea anemone, clownfish and needlefish. Or keep feet dry on a dhoni, sailing out to spot dolphins, flying fish and moonfaced manta rays. Back on shore, the box-fresh Scott Dunn kids' club is a delight, set in the centre of Play, the shiny bright new island (linked to the main hotel by a clackety wooden bridge under which the occasional turtle swims). Within its circus-styled buildings, the air-conditioned baby room has cots for naps, a good staff-to-little-ones ratio and endless sticking, crafting and painting (plus toys, books and games). Outside is an incredible fountain zone, with jets and streams that burst out of gigantic flower heads, a climbing wall, slides, sand diggers, and a disco stage with lighting that pulses in time to the music. The family beach pavilion is the one to book, with its own spatherapy room, hot tub and pair of pools. Inside it's modern and slick and, most importantly for jet-lagged light sleepers, has blackout blinds that slide down at the push of a button. BOOK IT Sleeps four. Carrier (+44 161 826 9647; www.carrier. co.uk) offers seven nights from £4,270 per family, based on two adults and two children sharing a beach studio, including flights, seaplane transfers and breakfast

# tropical TRIO

Winter escapes to warm, tropical destinations are hard to resist – particularly once Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts, Abercrombie & Kent and TUMI come in on the action







#### BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU

The intimate island of Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru has been made for two. Ridiculously romantic, it's the kind of resort that has you seriously considering tearing up your passport. The 48 pool villas wrap you in rustic, barefoot luxury: we love the super-sized beds draped in exquisite fabric, the outdoor showers, private plunge pools and the large wooden patios that lead straight onto blinding-white sand, fronted by an expanse of ocean blue. There's glorious sandbank dining under a blanket of stars, or, head to Sharkpoint, a secret stretch of sand where you can feast on chilled Maldivian lobster, sea scallops and decadent desserts. A favourite with sun-seekers and eco-travellers, there's also a brilliant Banyan Tree spa, a great dive school and a fantastic turtle conservation programme.

#### READER OFFER

Abercrombie & Kent has been at the forefront of the luxury travel industry for more than 50 years. For this issue it has put together some very special offers for Condé Nast Traveller readers:

- Seven nights at Banyan Tree Phuket from £1,950 pp\* Call A&K on 01242 547 704
- Five nights at Banyan Tree Al Wadi from
- £1,452 pp\* Call A&K on 01242 547 703
- Seven nights at Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru from £3,050 pp full board basis\* Call A&K on 01242 547 708

\*All costs are subject to availability and preferred travel dates, based on two people travelling together. Rate includes daily breakfast for two. (unless otherwise indicated), plus international flights and private transfers. Terms and conditions apply abercrombiekent.co.uk/banvan-tree.cfm



#### BANYAN TREE AL WADI

Be whisked away across the desert plains of Arabia to Banyan Tree Al Wadi, a magical oasis with a hint of nomadic romance. A jewel amid the sandscape wilderness (just 50 minutes' drive from Dubai) with a dedicated nature reserve, home to gazelles, camels and oryx, this is the UAE's first all-pool villa desert resort. The villas – traditional mud-brick or Bedouin-style tented - come complete with private pools and views of the surrounding Al Hajjar Mountains. The resort also offers a standout 4,000 square-metre hydrotherapy spa, plus access to a private beach courtesy of sister hotel, Banyan Tree Ras Al Khaimah Beach. Dining is exquisite - from melt-in-the-mouth Thai at Safran to wonderful Arabian-style barbecues - and we love Moon Bar for cocktails under the night sky. If you can tear yourself away from this Banyan Tree beauty, there are also loads of activities, from camel safaris and horseback riding, to falconry, golf and sunrise yoga.

#### Bag it!

There is no better way to travel on your unforgettable journey than armed with the perfect companion - TUMI.

This year TUMI has teamed up with New York street-savvy clothing label PUBLIC SCHOOL to create a stunning six-piece collection for fashion lovers and jet-setters. 'PUBLIC SCHOOL x TUMI' can be found online at uk.tumi.com



#### FAMILY



### FISHER HOUSE, MUSTIQUE

The Mustique set-up is incredibly civilised for families. At this private retreat, everyone cruises around in Kawasaki Mules, hopping in flip-flops from the soft sands of Macaroni beach to the wild waters at Pasture Bay, taking care to avoid any tortoises crossing the road and making detours to sign up for pony trekking, kite surfing or one of the weekly tennis camps. Fisher House in particular is stellar for an ultra-active brood - the 20-metre, pebble-lined pool with its waterfall is one of the best places to splash about on the island (owner Gordon McCallum, one of the head honchos at Virgin and long-time friend of Richard Branson's, has a household of keen swimmers). For those who just want to paddle there are glorious views from the shallow end, past the tiny runway where Twin Otter planes putt-putt in and out three or four times a day, over the avenue of palms and the rooftops of the Cotton House hotel, straight across the water to Bequia. The rest of the outside space is just as fantastic, with a huge terrace and plenty of mauve and grey beanbags for slumping on. The open-sided great room has L-shaped sofas piled high with silk-printed cushions, armchairs that swivel round 180 degrees to watch the sunset, books, board games and the biggest noughts and crosses set you'll ever see. For the odd rainy afternoon, there's a media room full of DVDs and daybeds. Joy, the chef, has been cooking at the house for 28 years. Breakfast, served in the gazebo, can include bowls of the sweetest mango, papaya and kiwi, warm pancakes, fresh juices - her beetroot-and-celery concoction has a particular kick - and strawberry and banana smoothies that taste like milkshake. There are three interconnecting bedrooms: two pretty doubles - with White Company bath linen, floral fabrics, limed wood and a bright and breezy bunkroom. But plans for a further trio of rooms will turn this place into a whopping, bring-the-whole-gang crash pad. BOOK IT Sleeps six. Seven nights' villa rental from £8,364, including four staff (+44 20 7201 6831; www.mustique-island.com)

## THE FLEMING VILLA AT GOLDENEYE, JAMAICA

Owned by Chris Blackwell, founder of Island Records and champion of Bob Marley, Goldeneye is famous as the home of lan Fleming. The writer's original house is now part of the five-bedroomed Fleming Villa, which has hosted Bill and Hilary, as well as Jay-Z and Beyoncé. It comes with its own pool and gaggle of staff; in the main bedroom is the museum-worthy desk where 007 was brought into existence. The villa is hidden away just off the curving, sandy bay with its snaking spine of palm and fig trees, bright wooden deckchairs, lush greenery and heavy bougainvillaea. If you don't have a party of 10, then there are a handful of two-bedroomed villas: four on Low Cay beach and one by the bath-warm waters of the lagoon. The former have a kitchen and breakfast bar and wooden steps straight onto the sand; the latter is more fun for older kids with hammocks, kayaks and over-water decks (more beach villas are in the pipeline for the next bay along). The style throughout is the same: polished wooden floors, painted clapboard and zesty patterned fabrics in lime and orange and aqua. There are clawfoot baths, outdoor rain showers and a set of Bond novels on bedside tables to read before lights out (the little touches are spot on, from clearly labelled lamp switches to a wooden ladder propped up against a tree by the shower for towels). At the end of the beach, there's a pear-shaped infinity pool and the open-air Bizot bar, all turquoise and sea-blue with driftwood lights, a thatch roof and pillars decorated with vintage album covers. This is

a laidback and unpretentious spot for a family mission. **BOOK IT** Sleeps 10. Seven nights' villa rental from about £24,709



**CRUISE** CAPSULE WARDROBE



be Africa, upon which she bestowed such a wealth of gifts. Here you'll find sun-baked savannahs teeming with wildlife, vast expanses of shimmering desert, rugged coastlines and craggy mountains whose peaks are dusted with snow and whose feet are carpeted in wild flowers.

The world's second largest continent, there's a lot of Africa to explore, so it's best to put yourself in the capable hands of an expert when you visit. And there can be few travel experts better placed to introduce you to the magic of Africa than **Silversea**. With over 20 years' experience sailing guests around the

globe, Silversea's fleet of eight 'ultra-luxury' ships visits over 800 destinations across the globe. Carrying between 100 and 540 guests, the intimate ships can slip

into lesser-visited ports yet offer unparalleled space and service with exclusively ocean view suites – most with private verandas and all with a butler.

While much is made of Silversea's exceptional onboard experience, it's equally important that your time ashore is remarkable. To this end, Silversea tailors unique 10- to

1. KUBE VOYAGEUR AND COMPAS TRIANGLE
BIKINI, £265, ERES. 2. MACANA WOVEN COTTON
KAFTAN, £230, SENSI STUDIO. 3. REBEL STUDS
CUTOUT LEATHER SANDALS, £370, AQUAZZURA.
4. NANA 18-KARAT GOLD, PEARL & SILK
NECKLACE, £3,630, CAROLINA BUCCI.
5. MAXI WOVEN TOQUILLA STRAW TOTE, £155,
SENSI STUDIO. 6. 14-KARAT GOLD & TOPAZ
EARRINGS, £250, MELISSA JOY MANNING, ALL

22-day itineraries that could have you navigating Africa's mysterious west coast from Ghana to South Africa, calling at the **Skeleton Coast, Namibia** and tropical paradise of **São Tomé and Principe**. Alternatively, you could sail east from **Cape Town**, visiting **Port Elizabeth**, **Durban** and **Richard's Bay** before reaching Mozambique's laid-back capital, **Maputo**.

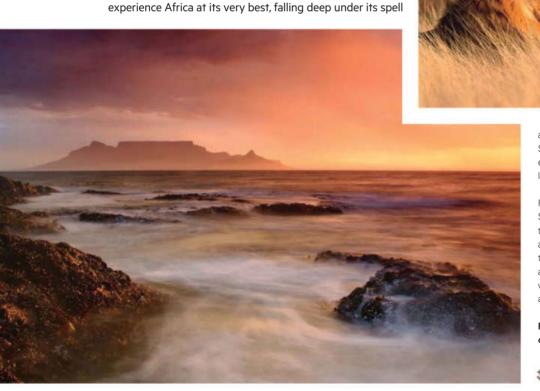
Regardless of where you choose to go, Silversea's Africa experts have sought out distinctive adventures for you including scenic flights over the Namib Desert, a visit to a Zulu village

and a fly-in elephant-back safari. If that's not enough, the Silver Shore concierge team is on hand to tailor even more remarkable experiences such as hot air balloon rides over spectacular landscapes and trips to private 'Big Five' game reserves.

For explorers seeking to truly immerse themselves in Africa, Silversea further offers Silver Shore Land Adventures – multi-day trips arranged before, during or after select voyages. These include a three-day tour of Cape Town, visiting the Cape of Good Hope and the Cape Winelands, and a four-night luxury safari to Ngala Lodge, a private reserve bordering on Kruger National Park. With Silversea, wherever you go in Africa, you'll find yourself humbled, captivated and inspired – living the stories you've always dreamt of telling.

Further information: silversea.com or call 0845 835 0069





get onboard

A journey to Africa is food for the soul but be warned - it will

leave you hungry for more! Whether you're visiting the great

continent for the first or the tenth time, Silversea will ensure you





### TARTARUGA HOUSE AT VAMIZI, MOZAMBIQUE

Set in the northern Quirimbas Archipelago, a scattering of 32 tiny, mostly uninhabited islands, Vamizi isn't exactly a place to nip to for a weekend. From Dar Es Salaam or Johannesburg it's a two-and-ahalf-hour flight, then a short hop in a small plane over villages, ramshackle fishing dhows, gin-clear seas - and occasionally a whale. But once you've landed on the little strip cut into the mangroves and kicked off your shoes, the getting there is forgotten. The main lodge and the hotel rooms are currently being refurbished, so settle straight into the thatched and stone cottages that make up Tartaruga, the newest of six private villas. It's set at the edge of a white, shell-strewn beach, with a swimming pool and sunbeds in the centre, and kids' bunkrooms and grown-up suites arranged behind. The housekeepers and butler, trained at Vamizi's ecohotel, couldn't be more smiley: serving lobster for lunch, as well as just-picked salads and fresh mango smoothies; organising barbecues on the beach and Champagne cocktails by the pool. For the energetic, there are kayaks on which to go out exploring, fishing trips to bring back tuna (conjured into sashimi later), diving excursions and snorkelling. Spa therapists can be called to administer coconut massages and salt body-scrubs; and there are hammocks and shaded daybeds on which to while away the hours, and outdoor candlelit baths in which to wallow and gasp at the Milky Way, lit up with shooting stars.

**BOOK IT** Sleeps 14. Steppes Travel (+ 44 843 636 8435; www.steppestravel.com) offers five nights from £15,980 based on two adults and two children, full board, including flights, transfers and activities









### CASA MADERA, PAPAYA PLAYA, TULUM

Papaya Playa is best known for its full-moon parties, for its sandy-floored, open-air nightclub with mirrored disco balls and visiting international DJs. But hidden in its jungle walkways is a treehouse that will send the latent hippie parent into an early-1990s, trance-like state of Orb-ish happiness. Everything is open to the elements so that the beach comes crashing at you from all sides like an excitable party crowd. Suck in its whoosh and howl at stars asking to be plucked like huckleberries from the sky. Here is your butler. She is called Maya; she has dreadlocks and new-wave tattoos and a skirt that doesn't cover her bottom. She'll deal with you on Whatsapp, sourcing mangos slippery as hot butter on a pan, the best tequila in the land, bicycles and tricycles and appointments with the shaman at dusk. The children play Pelmanism on the creaking floors, collect shells from the beach; they loll in the cool slip of the pool and chase after lizards. Beachside Tulum, and lunches at Pousada Margarita. are there if needed, as is downtown Tulum with its pretty embroidered dresses. But always return to the Casa for its simple pleasures: mosquito-netted four-posters, day beds and hammocks wherever they can be fitted. This is a beachside hobbit house, all hand-made out of wood. It takes you back to the best of times and makes you realise you can do it all over again with your feral beach babies in tow. Don't. Tell. Anyone. **BOOK IT** Sleeps five. Seven nights' villa rental from £5,924 (+52 1 984 116 3774; www.papayaplayaproject.com)

Contributors: Jane Broughton, Fiona Brown, Lucy Freedman, Lisa Grainger, Emma Love, Issy von Simson, Melinda Stevens







# Ionian IDYLLS

CV Villas has one of the best portfolios in Greece: this month we check out what's hot in the Ionian Islands, and find it sizzling with sought-after properties

zure seas and sun-parched earth; silver-green olive groves interspersed with ancient vineyards; soft golden beaches backed by scented lemon groves; this is the Greece of the Ionian Islands, the place that inspired CV Villas more than 40 years ago. Much of the archipelago that sweeps down the west coast of mainland Greece remains untouched. There's a step-back-in-time vibe particularly in the little villages, alive with local life; there's a rich culture, fabulous food, genuine Greek hospitality and miles of stunning coastline. And with CV Villas' 200-strong portfolio, guests can bed down in all sorts of style. Over the years the CV Villas team has unearthed

villas hiding above secret coves, cottages cocooned by cypress trees; houses in traditional villages or perched atop dramatic cliffs. Whichever property you choose, you can be safe in the knowledge that it has been tried and tested by one of the many passionate travel consultants. Whether travelling with family, friends or holidaying á deux, there's something magical about checking into a home miles away from home. Time to cast your eye over the Ionian Islands...

#### Corfu

Fresh, green and mountainous, Corfu is Greece's longest-standing tourist destination and the rural idyll

for Gerald Durrell's My Family and Other Animals. Much of the island's terrain remains unspoiled and in just a few minutes you can find yourself off the beaten track, stumbling across remote farmhouses and little restaurants serving steaming plates of moussaka. From ancient ruins and untouched nature, to a thriving beach scene and a smattering of pretty towns such as St Stephano and Kassiopi to potter about in, there is lots to see and do. The coast is where most of the action is, a veritable playground of swimming, boat trips, diving, snorkelling and water sports.



#### TRAVELLER ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE







Clockwise from this nage: Electra, Corfu; Pool terrace of Mimosa House Corfu; brunch at Prosilio, Corfu; Jacaranda House,

#### Villas en vogue

Having originated in Corfu, CV Villas' 100-plus portfolio is exceptional. Ones that caught our eye were the peaceful Villa Oneiro with its breathtaking views; Emerald (we love the veranda complete with fridge, ice machine and hammock); Allegra has its own jetty and gets a swift thumbs up for location, and nobody can ignore the unashamedly indulgent Alitheia with its in-room baths.

#### Paxos

The small, quiet, pine-covered Paxos is a popular stop-off with the yachting fraternity. Just 12km by 4km, a seasoned trekker could explore this get-away-from-it-all island on foot, while the more hammock-inclined can hire a scooter and pootle past ancient olive groves, through tiny villages alive with locals and down to little-known coves. We love the three pastel-coloured towns (Gaios, Loggos and Lakka), their harbours abuzz with boats, bars and restaurants. On the coast, cobalt sea meets cobalt sky and lazy days pass in a dreamy haze. Ultimately, Paxos is a place to relax, unwind and lift very few fingers. For an even sleepier



sojourn head to Anti-Paxos where life exists somewhere between snail and tortoise pace.

#### Villas en vogue

The CV books host 20 villas around Paxos including the family idyll of Estia just 50 metres away from a quiet cove with yacht-spotting views. We also love the look of sweet, secluded Villa Sal (sleeps two), and for larger groups, the effortlessly elegant Siorra Elena (sleeps up to 10) ticks the two families box.

#### Lefkada

Lefkada is the most cosmopolitan of the Ionian family. For a start, it is connected to the mainland by a causeway, and secondly, it was the only island in the archipelago to be conquered by the Ottoman Empire, giving it a more Turkish feel. Often overlooked for its more popular sisters, those who off-road to Lefkada find an under-appreciated gem with intricate lagoons (like those at Meganisi), spectacular cliffs and some of the best beaches in Greece. In addition to lovely Lefkada Town with its pastel houses, cobbled streets and excellent food scene there are the smaller resort towns of Nidri, Perigiali, Nikiana and Lygia. Sunbathing, swimming, siestas and water sports are high on the agenda, but for the more gung-ho, the mountainous interior is great for trekking, cycling and riding, and regular ferries run to Ithaca and Kefalonia for those seeking a bit of island hopping.

#### Villas en vogue

CV Villas has 20 villas in Lefkada. We love this portfolio that covers everything from the traditional stone cottage of Atokos (sleeps 2) and the incredibly chic Villa Olivia, to the location-limelight stealing Water's Edge and the super-smart staffed Beach House (caters for 10).

#### Kefalonia

A big island brought into the spotlight by Captain Corelli's Mandolin, Kefalonia has seen Italian occupation, German invasion, civil war and a devastating earthquake. But today it stands strong and beautiful, a destination back to its best with masses to see and do. From Skala in the south to Fiskardo in the north, from dramatic Assos to the beach pin-up of Myrtos, Kefalonia has a coastal vibe that is hard to beat. There's swimming, snorkelling, diving, yachting, beach bumming and cave exploring plus the food is excellent. Restaurant tables groan under the weight of mezze, sensational seafood and flagons of local wine. Inland the countryside is covered in olive groves and vineyards, fields are dotted with sheep and goats and Mount Ainos rises above it all - take a walk to the summit for spectacular views of the entire island.

#### Villas en vogue

CV Villas has 11 real beauties on the Kefalonia books including the unrivalled Villa Aphrodite with oodles of wow factor (sleeps 13); the rural retreat of Villa Paradiso surrounded by fig, pomegranate and olive trees and the familyfriendly Arthusa, just a stroll from the sand.

For a full destination lowdown and the pick of island villas, visit cyvillas.com







Malaysia has vast appeal for both the intrepid traveller and those seeking a luxurious adventure. We can't rave enough about this natural playground

he recently launched direct flight from British Airways has made Malaysia even more accessible to UK travellers. Those who off-road to this unsung country find a beguiling land bursting with colour and culture, nature and adventure, fabulous food, and the kindest welcome. With so much to see, many travellers combine two or more Malay destinations or take a longer Malaysian journey.

#### MAINLAND MALAYSIA

Most start in Kuala Lumpur, an edgy city where old meets new, and where mosques and temples stand alongside skyscrapers, shopping malls and trendy nightspots. Head 200km north to find the tea plantations of the Cameron Highlands. This is Malaysia's hill station, an alpine escape of blue peaks, green hills, tumbling rivers and small towns. Enjoy the cool, fresh climate, and spend days trekking and tea tasting. The perfect base is Cameron Highland Resort, a 56-room boutique hideaway surrounded by peaceful plantations.

#### MALAYSIA'S ISLANDS

Malaysia's islands are beach pin-ups where flying in then flopping is all too easy. But fight the laze-inducing vibe and go exploring – you'll unearth a load of

island treasures. Langkawi has been on the hot list since the Datai opened its luxurious treetop doors. This expansive jungle lodge above a curve of platinum sand offers a unique adventure. Dive the pantone-coloured coral reef or trek the 10-million year old rainforest with resident naturalist Irshad Mobarak in search of the dusky leaf monkey and flying lemur; go after dark to spot bats and flying squirrels; kayak through mangroves and watch kites and kingfishers swoop and fiddler crabs scuttle. Another natural idyll is the jungle-strewn private island of Pangkor Laut Resort. Home to glorious beaches and acres of wild rainforest, travellers can take canopy tours or zipwire through the trees, walk forest paths to hidden waterfalls and swim in natural pools. Both are an easy onward journey from Kuala Lumpur and the Cameron Highlands, making a great two- or three-stop Malay journey. Over in Borneo is another island making its name for all the right reasons. Gaya Island Resort is teeming with coral reefs, protected mangroves, thick jungle, and it also runs a brilliant PURE activity programme, immersing guests in the environment. Walk the hushed, forested trails - home to monkeys, mouse deer and bearded pigs - take yoga under a canopy of trees and end with reef diving.



Clockwise from top: Stunning Malaysian panorama; Kuala Lumpur; Lambir National Park, Borneo; Rebak Marina, Langkawi

#### MALAYSIAN BORNEO

Sabah is a wildlife wonderland – from orangutans to whale sharks – it provides an up close and personal adventure. From Kota Kinabalu it's 40 minutes down to Pantai Dalit beach and the secluded Shangri-La Ras Ria, complete with 64-acre orangutan conservation reserve. Kinabalu Park is perfect hiking terrain where the energetic can climb to the summit of Mount Kinabalu. A short flight away is the famous Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, while further afield is Danum Valley Conservation Area. Travellers fly to Lahad Datu, before driving to this extraordinary place far away from civilisation. It's worth the journey for the chance to see Sumatran rhinoceros, clouded leopard, orangutan and majestic Asian elephants.

For further information, visit tourism.gov.my

#### Reader offers

■ Kuala Lumpur, Cameron Highlands and Pangkor Laut

Cleveland Collection is offering 11 nights B&B from £1,730 per person including British Airways flights, transfers, two nights at the Majestic Kuala Lumpur, two nights at Cameron Highlands Resort and seven nights at Pangkor Laut Resort.

■ Kuala Lumpur, Cameron Highlands and Langkawi

Enjoy 11 nights B&B from £1,920 per person, including British Airways flights, internal flights and transfers, two nights at the Majestic Kuala Lumpur, two nights at Cameron Highlands Resort and seven nights at the Datai.

■ Borneo and Danum Valley

Experience a 10-night Borneo journey from £2,320 per person including British Airways flights, internal flights, transfers, one night B&B at Shangri La Tanjung Aru, two nights full board at Borneo Rainforest Lodge with shared excursions, and six nights B&B at Gaya Island Resort.

To book, call Cleveland Collection on 020 7843 3531 or visit cleveland collection.co.uk. Offers are based on two sharing. Room categories apply.



# FLAVOUR HUNTER

Food and drink fixes from Spain Portugal New York Japan Cape Town Korea Paris

FDITED BY FIONA KERR

## TABLE TO BOOK

Feel-good summer vibes last all year round at Madrid's most talked-about new spot

Can a café sum up the mood of a city? Designer Parolio thinks his latest project, Wanda, does just that. The Spanish capital was hit hard by the financial crisis, but now fresh rays of optimism are peeking through, with funky new hotels and trend-tapping restaurants opening in a flurry. Nowhere is this positivity more visible than right here. 'After the grey recession years I wanted to communicate the opposite: vitality, joy, colour,' says Parolio. Walls are painted in ice-cream shades; fluorescent tones pop from the ikat motifs on cushions below photos of Californian summers. That new-wave healthy West Coast feel extends to the menu too: sea-bass carpaccio and lentil-and-tofu burgers with beetroot houmous. It gets more sinful after dark when bright young things sink frozen Melon Daiquiris. This day-to-night hangout is forging a fresh-faced revolution in the city, with organic market El Huerto de Lucas and juice bars such as the living-wall-covered Fit Food popping up all over town. www.wandacafe.com. About £40 for two





# WORLD ON A PLATE

THE INGREDIENT: CLAMS

## EAT ME

#### By Joanna Weinberg

Portugal – or at least the Algarve – has a reputation that masks its reality. You may think of golf courses and high-rise beach developments but you forget that 30 minutes inland it is rugged. As you drive through orange groves laid out in fat, corduroy rows, the scent of garlic spikes the warm air and the blue-and-white naive pottery stalls on the side of the road seem more authentic. Drift through the scrubby landscape dotted with ancient olive trees and find yourself in a place 50 years lost.

Portugal is not famous for its food. By repute, it is not distinguished by much other than the volume of oil involved, and like so many things abroad, it doesn't travel well. While it is not an ambitious cuisine, it is certain of what it does well. Its firm anchors are the familiar ingredients of southern Europe: garlic, excellent olive oil, chilli, oregano, lemons. The village markets teem with piles of blushing apricots, giant tomatoes and sweet watermelons, as perfect as any you will find in the finest markets of France. Mess with them at your peril.

For the essence, and excellence, of Portuguese cooking is peasant fare: the imprecision of what is to hand, thrown into a pot with aromatics, good oil and plenty of lemon, to a family recipe. Lose the immediacy of its ingredients – the freshness of the fish, the fat juiciness of the tomatoes, the fragrant hit of herbs – and the final dish will amount to disappointment.

Little can beat a day here on a wild Atlantic beach – huge and wide and white – and moreover, lunch in a shack on the sand, ordering a *cazuela* of *amêijoas Bulhão Pato*. Bulhão Pato, a 19th-century Portuguese Romantic, may have wished his poetic legacy to have been words but instead his enduring gift was a simple dish of clams with garlic and coriander.

In villages you can buy little clams by the bucket, still in sea water, for pennies. The sea water has a purpose; allow them

# THE 19TH-CENTURY PORTUGUESE POET MAY HAVE WISHED HIS LEGACY TO BE WORDS BUT INSTEAD IT WAS A DISH OF CLAMS

to sit in it somewhere cool for at least an hour, preferably three, and they will spit out the sand they have gathered. Back home, this process is equally important, as much for the clams as for the slow, holiday-like pacing of it. If you have no sea water, a bowl of cool water seasoned generously with sea salt will do fine. Settle in a corner somewhere, perhaps against a wall warm with the last of the sun, and scrub your clams clean into a bucket. For those few moments, you may find yourself on holiday again.

## DRINK ME

#### By Malcolm Gluck

Even a gourmet of barely average genius will insist that Portuguese clams demand a white wine. They will then go on to aver, paradoxically, that the most obvious candidate is green wine, the crisp *pétillant* white of Portugal otherwise known as *vinho verde*. Do I concur? Not entirely. I find most somewhat jejune and easily overpowered by food, even bivalves. For my money, I would prefer a white with more backbone.

I recommend, therefore, crossing the border north into Galicia and going for Rías Baixas made 100 per cent from the Albariño grape. From Asda to Waitrose, examples of this Spanish wine

## PUT THESE WINES DOWN FOR 15, MAYBE 20 YEARS AND NOT ONLY WILL HEALTHY LIQUIDS EMERGE BUT FAR MORE DAZZLING ONES

abound from £7 to £16 or so a bottle and it is, I think, a better bet with that clam recipe because it has more bite and greater depth. The best value has to be Tesco's Finest Albariño at £7.49 (or, via www.tesco.com, £44.94 the case). Sainsbury's own label is a similar price but is sealed with a cork whereas Tesco's has a screwcap and has been made by a woman – both huge virtues to my mind and more than enough to give Tesco the edge.

Even so, in recommending such a wine (let alone such a wine merchant) I fear I remain a wretched cliché peddler. What is to be done? We must travel to Austria and knock at the door of Rudolf Rabl in the Langenlois. He and his sons produce exemplary Rieslings and Grüner Veltliners and both grapes suit our clam dish perfectly. Rabl Schenkenbichl Riesling 2010 (£22.50) and Rabl Grüner Veltliner Käferberg 2010 (£20) are minerally rich yet with an assertive resourcefulness that no amount of spicing, let alone lemon juice, will defeat. Each wine is elegant, beautifully structured and offers myriad stone-fruit touches with citric undertones. What is more, each bottle is screwcapped, which means you could put these wines down for 15, maybe 20 years and not only will healthy liquids emerge when opened but far more dazzling ones.

Where to buy such beauties? At the Merry Widows, that's where. Visit their website, www.merrywidowswine.com, which is run by Charlotte Bendel and Linn Rothstein. This feisty pair also display their wares from Friday to Sunday at the Real Food Market behind London's Royal Festival Hall. Visitors to the city now have an additional reason to find the South Bank of the Thames alluring, though, if you ask me, Merry Widows is a more thrilling attraction than the London Eye and a good deal cheaper.

#### FLAVOUR HUNTER



#### **UNDER THE GRILL**

# Kelis

Her milkshake might have brought all the boys to the yard but these days you'll find the BRIT-award-winning singer in the kitchen

SPLURGE TREAT? 'Animal in Los Angeles, where I live. I love meat, and Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook's place definitely lives up to its name: it's for hardcore carnivores. I especially like the oxtail poutine. And in New York, II Mulino – the original one on Thompson Street – is the place for Italian.'

**STREET EAT?** 'Singapore has the best food courts. I had this Japanese yam ball covered in what I think was tapioca flour and then rolled in sesame seeds. It is one of the best things I have ever eaten. And in Penang there's a food truck where I had roti tisu that I still often think about.'

**GO-TO DRINK?** 'I'm a serious wine drinker, red always.'

**FOOD TO FLY FOR?** 'Oh man, I don't think I can choose just one place. Lebanon has amazing food, Thailand is up there too, of course, and I love going to Poland

for pierogies and kielbasa, Belgium for the moules frites, waffles and chocolate, Kuala Lumpur for chutney, Colombia for arepas and empanadas, the South of France for wine. The list could go on and on.'

**STRANGEST SNACK?** 'I tasted seal in Tromsø, Norway, which was not delicious, although I loved moose in Alaska.'

#### **DESERT ISLAND INGREDIENTS?**

'Salt, olive oil and an onion. I can make magic with those three things.'

**BEST COFFEE?** 'It was Kuala Lumpur until I went to Colombia. They take it very seriously. The varieties are endless.'

GUILTY PLEASURE? 'On a Friday night a fresh Wetzel's pretzel and a 7-Eleven Slurpee reminds me that no matter how far I go, sometimes what I really want is just down the block.' Kelis's cookbook 'My Life on a Plate' (Kyle Books, £19.99) is out now



# BEST FOR GETTING OUT AND ABOUT Turquoise has a number of local guides who can take you on private tours: from long tail boat trips through the city's klongs (canals) to day excursions to the magnificent temples and ancient ruins of Ayutthaya. Learn the history of the River Kwai or see lush countryside in surrounding Kanchanaburi province.

#### REST FOR GOURMET

Bangkok is undoubtedly a culinary capital and steaming plates of street food are a must-try. But for those who prefer a tablecloth (or at least a table), there are some extra-special haunts in which to chow down. For cutting-edge Thai food, try Sra Bua by Kiin Kiin at Siam Kempinski, or for more traditional fare, book into the utterly romantic Issaya Siamese Club. Hidden away in a 100-yearold house, resolutely Thai dishes come courtesy of Ian Kittichai and are loved by locals, expats and the few travellers who manage to find it. His second addition to the city is the vividly eccentric Namsaah Bottling Trust, serving exquisite pan-Asian food and awesome cocktails. Seafood lovers: look no further than the banks of the Chao Phraya River and the beautiful Supatra River House

## Banyan Tree Bangkok



The Peninsula is one of Bangkok's finest hotels with amazing views, a central riverside location and an outstanding spa (from £220 per night). We also love The Siam - a boutique hideaway with just 39 rooms and pool villas overlooking the river - this intimate oasis feels a world away (from £410 per night). And who can resist the lure of the sophisticated Banyan Tree Bangkok with its huge rooms, rooftop dining and evening dinner cruise (from £140 per night). And then there's The Siam of Siam a quirky bolthole in Siam Square. It's close to the action and good value, with a cool vibe that attracts the younger crowd (from £100 per night).





## bright lights Bangkok

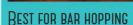
# **BIG CITY**

We get the latest lowdown on what's hot and happening in Bangkok from Thailand experts, Turquoise Holidays

Most Thai journeys start or end in the brilliant, buzzing and often bamboozling city of Bangkok. Chaotic but captivating, once you get to grips with this energetic urban hub, you get the best out of it.

Just make sure you're in the know.





The Long Table,

The Long Table has a super-cool vibe, incredible cocktails and its 70-seat table is reportedly the world's longest. Bamboo Bar is best for live jazz, while Distil, a 64th-floor rooftop bar complete with oysters and a malt whisky menu, is a favourite with the rich and famous. Dark and brooding, we love the maze of staircases, secret doors and dark alcoves of Iron Fairies, while Face Bar – modelled on a traditional Silk Route inn – gets our vote for its old-world ambience.

## REST FOR CULTURE

Be blown away by the gleaming, glittering Wat Phra Kaew . This temple complex is the spiritual core of Thai Buddhism and setting of the Grand Palace. A pilgrimage for devout Buddhists (and royalists), the grounds contain more than 100 buildings as well as the revered Emerald Buddha. Another must-visit is Wat Pho home to the super-sized Reclining Buddha. At 46 metres long and 15 metres high it is genuinely impressive, and if you arrive early you'll witness monks chanting. A quirky cultural detour is Jim Thompson House, once home to the American silk entrepreneur, today it houses a wonderful collection of art alongside his personal belongings. For a total onslaught on the senses, embrace the chaos of Chinatown on a cycle tour - there's nothing quite like it.

## BEST FOR RETAIL THERAPY

With many a mega-mall popping up, Bangkok is fast becoming one of the world's must-shop stopovers. The immense MBK Center has recently been joined by two newbies: the all-white futuristic Central Embassy boasting loads of luxury, and the glass-tastic EmGuartier with 400 labels in 4,000 square metres. But it's not all 21st-century glitz and glamour. Chatuchak Weekend Market covers 35 acres with its 8,000-plus stalls and after-dark shopping looks particularly good down Khao San Road and at Asiatique open air-mall.

Beyond the city, Turquoise's Thai portfolio is a pack-your-bag-now collection of romantic hideaways and inspiring itineraries. The team recommend at least two nights in **Bangkok** before journeying further afield on the extensive network of domestic flights. You can reach the northern cities of **Chiang Mai** and **Chiang Rai** with ease, as well as the blissful beach boltholes on the **Andaman coast** or gorgeous getaways on the **Gulf of Thailand**.



## Eat the street

For the past decade Woodstock has been the creative hub of Cape Town, but now the action is shifting downtown to Bree Street. Named after the Dutch word for wide, Bree's once-quiet, broad stretch is home to buzzy ventures behind Victorian-style fronts as well as the oldest vine in the country. This is South Africa's hippest new foodie address



#### 9AM: COFFEE

#### Jason Bakery, No 185

This is where smart creatives get their daily double shot and pastries. On Saturdays it's the doughssant: fried croissant rounds with a variety of toppings including lemon curd. www.jasonbakery.com

#### 10AM: BREAKFAST

#### Bacon on Bree, No 217

The city's love affair with bacon peaked with this recent opening: organic, cured meats worked into butties, BLTs and burgers by local charcuterie king Richard Bosman. www.bacononbree.com

#### 12.30PM: LUNCH

Chefs Warehouse & Canteen, No 92
Get in early at Liam Tomlin's cult spot for daily-changing tapas. The adjoining kitchen shop stocks a glut of cookbooks and great gadgets including ravioli rolling pins. www.chefswarehouse.co.za. About £20 for two

#### 3PM: SHOP

#### Culture Club Cheese, No 215

This zingy yellow-fronted store, left, sells a staggering and suitably whiffy selection of cheeses. A blackboard menu chalks up toasties, raclette and Camembert mac 'n' cheese. www.cultureclubcheese.co.za

#### 5PM: SUNDOWNER

#### Clarke's, No 133

All-day breakfasts and American diner classics have made Clarke's a taste destination, but those in the know check in for happy hour. Try the Martinis made with Inverroche gin and South African botanicals (buchu, aloe vera and wild flowers). www.clarkesdining.co.za

#### 8PM: DINNER

#### Bocca, No 128

Following the success of sister restaurant Burrata, this slick Italian joint nails its Neapolitan pizzas (bianco or rosso) fired to charred perfection. Co-founder and sommelier Neil Grant has curated one of the best wine lists around. www.bocca.co.za. About £30 for two

#### 10PM: DRINKS

#### Mother's Ruin, No 219; Door 221; The Gin Bar, No 64a

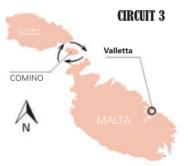
Gin's the thing in Cape Town and there are hip dive bars multiplying on Bree Street, including Mother's Ruin and Door 221. But the best is around the corner on Wale Street: The Gin Bar focuses on just four potent cure-alls. www.mothersruin.co.za; www.facebook.com/ door221; www.theginbar.co.za JANE BROUGHTON



what do you imagine?
History? Culture?
Architecture?
Delicious Mediterranean cuisine?
Malta and its islands, just south
of Sicily, encapsulate all those
things. But they are also home
to heavenly landscapes, quiet
corners – and one of the most
beautiful bays in the world. So
beautiful, in fact, that there are
some who would like it recognised
as the eighth wonder of the world.
Enter Malta's tiny island of Comino and its

gorgeous Blue Lagoon.

The name is misleading: the Blue Lagoon is actually a divine conglomeration of not only varying shades of blue, but also emerald, aquamarine, cerulean and indigo. Its crystal-clear waters reflect the azure sky above; the pure white sands at its bottom are so



Maltese Islands

clearly visible you can almost count the grains. In fact, Comino and its Blue Lagoon are so beautiful that they have been chosen as backdrops for such films as *Helen of Troy, Swept Away* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Children can play safely in its warm, shallow waters; older family members can bask in the Maltese sun, partake of a wide range of nonmotorised water sports inside the lagoon, or water

ski in the deeper waters nearby.

left: Sailing around

islands; Diving in

Malta; A boat in the

Blue Lagoon, Comino

Away from this gorgeous rocky bay, nature rules on the 3.5 square kilometre Comino island (named after the cumin seed that could once be found everywhere in Malta). The peaceful landscape – less than 10 people actually inhabit the island – encompasses cliffs, two sandy beaches, coves and creeks – the perfect setting



for a bird sanctuary and nature reserve. With no roads or cars here, winding pathways invite you to ramble, hike or ride a bike to the 13th-century Chapel of Our Lady's Return from Egypt; or to the ancient St Mary's Tower, a fortification built by the Knights of Malta in 1618 to keep pirates away. Alternatively, you can spend long, hot summer days in, on or under the incredible Mediterranean waters all around. Situated between Malta and Gozo, Comino is a paradise for snorkellers, windsurfers and divers (Malta was voted 3rd place in the 'Destination of the Year' category in the DIVER Awards 2015). Or, simply cruise off to Gozo, another of Malta's gems.

#### How to get there

Comino can be reached by boat from Malta or Gozo. Fly to Malta from a choice of 10 UK airports with Air Malta, the airline of the Maltese islands, offering competitive prices that include a 20kg baggage allowance. Fares from £75 one way, including taxes, subject to availability. For reservations, visit airmalta.com



## TASTE BUZZ

#### KOREAN FRIED CHICKEN

#### THE CRAZE

After the roast-chicken obsession (see London's Chicken Shop) came fried-chicken fanaticism. But now the inspiration has moved on from southern American states to **Seoul** with Korean fried chicken, the new KFC. Its secret? The addictive, ultra-thin, crispy coating that comes from double frying.

#### TRY IT

It's standing room only at Fuku in New York's East Village, the latest opening from Korean-American chef David Chang (of Momofuku fame).

Mutter 'Koreano' when ordering a fried-chicken sandwich to get the not-on-the-menu pickled daikon radish atop a spicy fried thigh in a steamed potato roll bun. Meanwhile in Paris, Hero is the city's newest hotspot, where the 'KFC' comes coated in spicy gochujang or sweet garlic sauce.



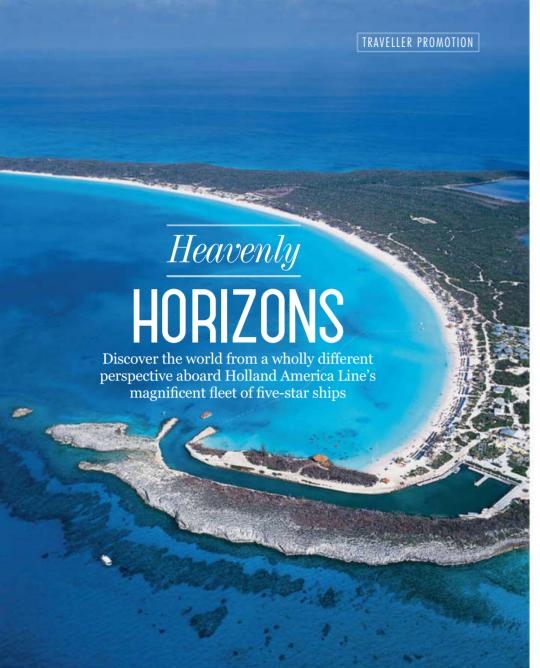


Japan's alcohol intake increased by an astonishing – make that a staggering – 600 per cent over the second half of the 20th century. So the stereotype of the hard-working, hard-drinking 'salaryman' – white collar, nose to the grindstone by day, red face, nose to the subway platform by night – is not entirely new. Check out the rogues' gallery on the #nomisugi Twitter feed and you will understand the tragicomic possibilities.

Chances are that few of these wasted wage slaves got that way on sake. By the 1970s sake production was in decline. Beer had become the nation's drink of choice. Sake was seen as too fuddy-duddy, too stuck in its own venerable, courtly and ceremonial past. Happily, it is now starting to make a comeback. Although the basic

## IN ITS OWN VENERABLE, COURTLY AND CEREMONIAL PAST

ingredients of rice, water, *koji* (a mould) and yeast are simple, the complexities of the production process are endless (as are the rules for drinking it: small cups; cold not warm; never pour for yourself). The way the rice is milled and polished, for instance, may have a significant bearing on the flavour and fragrance of the final product. Or it may not. The water, *koji* and yeast also play their parts – as does the skill of the individual brewer. Ambiguity, subtlety, the illusion of simplicity, the weight of tradition, the quest for innovation? You might almost be in Japan. STEVE KING *Sake tours/tastings around Japan are available through www.insidejapantours.com* 



no doubt, for its innovative ideas, designed to enhance

no doubt, for its innovative ideas, designed to enhance guests' experience. Afterall, a library and internet centre powered by the *New York Times*; a culinary arts theatre featuring cookery demonstrations and lectures, and an in-depth 'on location' destination programme are just some of the highlights.

And then there is its magnificent new 'pinnacle-class' ms Koningsdam - joining the fleet in April 2016. Fluid curves, graceful lines and light-filled places dominate the interiors by pre-eminent hospitality designer Adam D Tihany. Huge staterooms range from single to family size, while a choice of fine dining includes a French seafood brasserie; an immersive farm-to-table dinner experience; a casual lido market with themed serving stations, and favourites such as Pinnacle Grill, Canaletto Italian and pan-Asian Tamarind. The newest ship of any major cruise line to sail in Europe in 2016, ms Koningsdam will spend the summer weeks of her inaugural season exploring iconic Mediterranean gems from the port of Rome, then homeport from Amsterdam to visit spectacular fjords, stunning Baltic cities, the North Cape, Iceland and beyond. Come winter, seven- to 11-night cruises will sail from Florida to the Caribbean for sun-drenched days on deck in private cabanas, a glass of bubbly and chocolatedipped strawberries in hand. Luxuriate as St Lucia, Barbados, Aruba, Curacao and the Bahamas including Holland America Line's luxurious private island, Half Moon Cay - drift into view. Heavenly horizons, indeed.

For further details and reservation, visit your travel professional, call 0843 374 2300 or visithollandamerica.co.uk



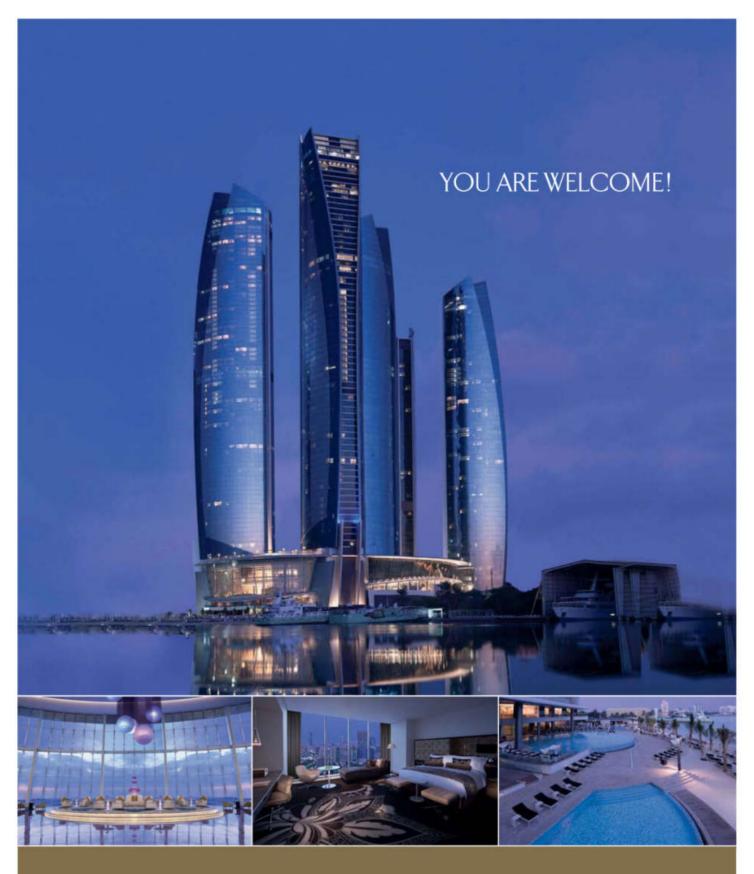
laskan glaciers to Asian temples; Australasia to the mighty Amazon; colonial Canada to the balmy Caribbean: leisurely Mediterranean explorations to midnight sun and Arctic voyages; fjord breaks to a full Iceland circumnavigation: there are no boundaries to the wishlist of the discerning world traveller when it comes to the Holland America Line 2016 programme.

Epitomising the ultimate in travel experiences with its fleet of 14 five-star ships, Holland America Line offers the best in premium cruising to the seven continents of the world. Think stylish, mid-sized ships adorned with

priceless art and fresh flowers; special touches such as pure Egyptian cotton sheets and fluffy bathrobes that come as standard, and spacious staterooms — many of which offer a private balcony. But don't just take our word for it: Holland America Line was recently awarded 'Best Cruise Value' for the 22nd consecutive year by experienced cruisers from the World Ocean & Cruise Liner Society, thanks to its extraordinary levels of service, quality, value — and,

Clockwise from top: Half Moon Cay, San Salvador; At the Cabana Club; Tamarind Pan Asian Restaurant; ms Koningsdam

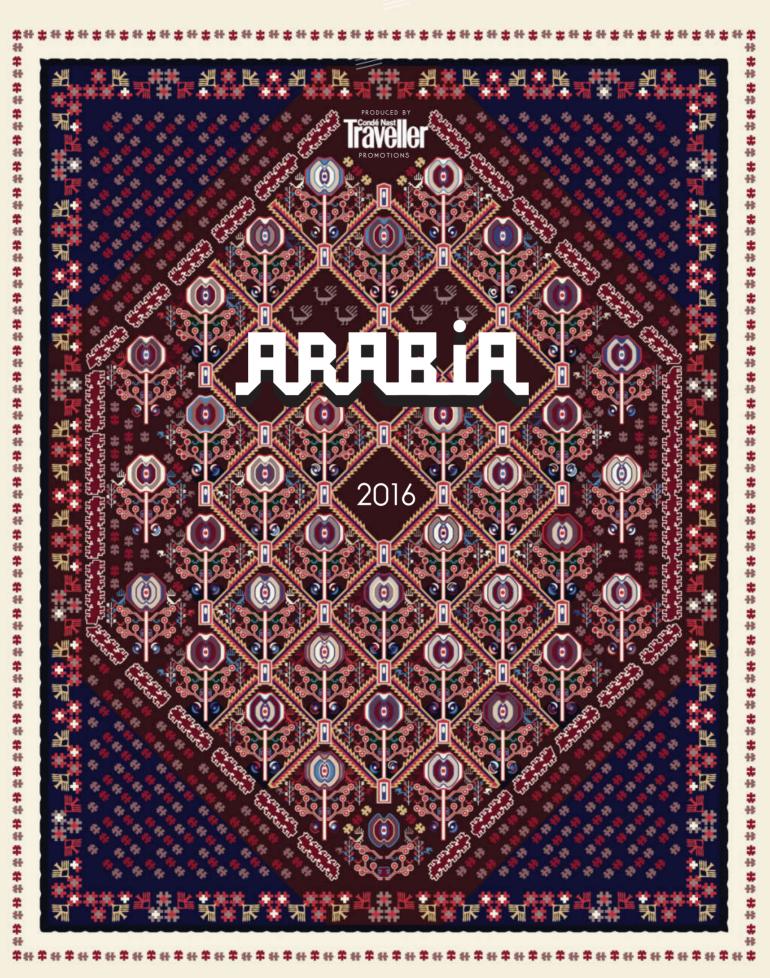


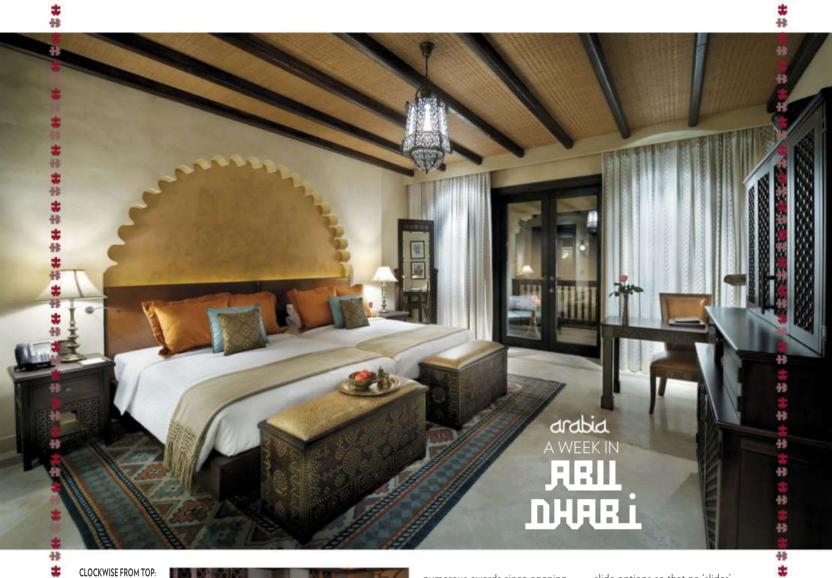


You are different. That is why we have created a modern urban lifestyle experience in the cosmopolitan city of Abu Dhabi that is sure to exceed your every expectation. Introducing Jumeirah at Etihad Towers in the heart of Abu Dhabi.

For reservations please contact +97l 2 8ll 5888 or visit jumeirah.com







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DELUXE TWIN SUITE AT THE QASR AL SARAB; 'RUSH RIDER' AT YAS WATERWORLD; LI BEIRUT, JUMEIRAH EMIRATES TOWERS

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#### DRY1

Check into

#### ■ St Regis Abu Dhabi

Grand, but not blindingly so, the St Regis is all sky-high ceilings, traditional but modish wind towers and chic up-lighting. Don't miss Thai restaurant Sontaya, the peaceful adultonly pool or the dolphins that pass by the beach in the mornings. stregisabudhabi.com

#### Drive

#### ■ the F1 track on Yas Island

Experience the track from behind the wheel of a Formula Yas 3000, and hurtle through Yas Viceroy itself – the first hotel to be built over an F1 racetrack. There are even driving lessons for kids. yasmarinacircuit.com

#### Eat at

#### ■ Brasserie Angélique

Regularly touted as the best restaurant in the emirate, Brasserie Angélique has swept up numerous awards since opening in 2012, with its chic Paris-meets-Abu-Dhabi lavishness, caring service and fine French food. *jumeirah.com* 

#### Drink at

#### ■ Pearls Bar

When you think back to the time you spent in the UAE capital, the moments spent gazing out from alfresco Pearls Bar at the imposing Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque across the water will feature highly in your mind's eye. shangri-la.com

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Dive into

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#### ■ Yas Waterworld

There are waterparks, and then there's Yas Waterworld. It has several never-seen-before rides, including the Dawwama – it apparently feels like being 'flung through a tornado', while the Slither Surprise offers 30 different

slide options so that no 'slider' has to experience the same combination of twists and turns twice in one day.

yaswaterworld.com

#### Eat at

#### ■ Li Beirut, Jumeirah Emirates Towers

Think Lebanese-style dishes such as kebbeh and baba ghanoush, but with additional Mediterranean>



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# ABIL DHARI

ingredients such as caramelised honey pear and poached lobster, served on a buzzy terrace overlooking the pool and beach. Almost as thrilling as a night in Beirut itself. jumeirah.com

#### E YRI Stay in

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#### ■ The Empty Quarter, Qasr Al Sarab

The mess of burning oranges, silky golds and peachy creams sprawling out endlessly before you in Rub' al Khali, the largest sand desert in the world (aka 'The Empty Quarter') reveal that a desert can be as colourful as a lush jungle. Book a bed and camel trek at the Qasr Al Sarab - true luxury surrounded by such belittling nothingness. qasralsarab.anantara.com

#### DRY 4

#### Ride a buggy around Al Ain Zoo

With large enclosures, more than 4,000 animals and late-night openings during steamy summer months, adults get excited about visiting Al Ain Zoo - even without kids in tow. Don't miss baby Grant the zebra or giraffe feeding time. Oh, and if you just can't handle the walk between enclosures, you can hop on the zoo shuttle service. Only in the UAE... awpr.ae

#### Or go one better and book a night or two at

#### ■ Sir Bani Yas Island

You may not be in Africa, but you can still go on safari here. The late UAE founder, Sheikh Zayed

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** AERIAL VIEW OF THE

CORNICHE, ABU DHABI THE FAIRMONT BAB AL BAHR, ABU DHABI; **EMIRATES PALACE BEACH** 



bin Sultan Al Nahyan, made Sir Bani Yas Island a nature reserve in 1971. Today the resort is home to more than 13.000 animals. including threatened species from across the world such as cheetahs, hyenas and golden jackals. sirbaniyasisland.com

#### DRY S

#### Hop aboard

#### a boat and sail out to Al Maya Island

For Dhs100 (about £17.50) you can bag a spot on a shuttle boat and use all the facilities at Al Maya Island Resort, a 10-minute jaunt outside the capital, before catching the last ride home. Ideal if you're looking for a peaceful escape from city life - or, on Fridays, a huge pool party fuelled by house music and hundreds of merrymakers. Don't get your days mixed up. almayauae.com

#### A YAU

#### Inhale some culture at ■ Saadiyat Cultural District

Promising to be one of the most phenomenal arts centres the world has ever seen once completed (set for 2020) - right now you can visit Manarat Al Saadiyat for the interactive story of the island and exhibitions. Be one of the first there. saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae

## ב צאת

#### Wakeboard at

#### Al Forsan Cable Park

Cross wakeboarding and surfing with a flying fox and this is what you get. Hours and hours of faceplants and fun. alforsan.com

#### Recover at

#### ■ Cedar Lounge at the Fairmont Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi residents swear that Cedar Lounge serves the city's

**■ Emirates Palace**, and drink

Finz restaurant, Rontana



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1 CAMEL LEOPARD EYE MASK £50 OTISBATTERBEE.COM 2. SALSA DELUXE BEAUTY CASE, £280, RIMOWA.COM 3 TYGER TYGER SHAWL £800 UK HERMES.COM 4. DSQUARED2 TORTOISE SHELL SUNGLASSES, £196, AVAILABLE AT MARCOLIN TEL: 01635 277299 5. SUPERGA PUMPS, £50, SUPERGA.CO.UK 6. WOMEN'S SLIM LOGO FLIP FLOPS, £24, HAVAIANAS-STORE COM

## Mosey along

Stay at

a gold leaf coffee.

Eat seafood at

kempinski.com

Abu Dhabi

rotana.com

■ The bustling Corniche

visitabudhabi.ae



best Lebanese food (the cheese rolls are especially good). Plus, there are fantastic live music and belly dancing performances every night. fairmont.com









#### DRY 1 Check into

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#### ■ One&Only The Palm

The city's most stylish hotel, One&Only The Palm is a thing of beauty at the very end of the Palm Jumeirah's West Crescent - both close and far enough from all the action.

thepalm.oneandonlyresorts.com

#### Sunbathe (safely) at ■ Nasimi Beach, Atlantis the Palm

One of Dubai's hippest beach clubs, and its most reasonable: sun-worshippers can lounge for free as long as they spend at

least £26 (£35 on weekends) on bar food and drink. atlantisthepalm.com

#### Dance at

#### ■ 360°

Shaped like a helipad, set at the end of a jetty and flanked by both the Burj Al Arab and the rippling Arabian Gulf, 360° simply mustn't be missed during a Dubai visit. jumeirah.com

#### DRY 2

#### Have breakfast with

#### ■ an Emirati, in Al Fahidi **Historic District**

Emiratis make up roughly 11

per cent of Dubai's population, making your chances of a casual chat with a national during your stay pretty slim. But at these laidback walking tours and meals (priced from £14), guests are

invited to ask the local host any

question they like about life in



#### Climb aboard ■ a BBQ Donut

So-named due to their rotund, ring-shape, Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club's BBQ Donut boats

are akin to little floating dining rooms, in which you and a pile of mates can cook up your own barbecue while bobbing down the creek. dubaigolf.com

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### Enjoy a lazy day at

#### ■ Talise Ottoman Spa

Home to the Middle East's largest hammam (a region with a fair number of hammams), Jumeirah Zabeel Saray's opulent spa is also home to a snow room, adventure showers and peaceful salt water thalassotherapy swimming pool. jumeirah.com

#### Drink fruity drinks at

#### ■ Lotus Lounge, Anantara The Palm

So Thai in look and feel (and staff) that you can be forgiven for thinking you've driven to a different country. This relatively new Palm addition is the ideal spot at which to sip cocktails while looking serenely out over the sea.

dubai-palm.anantara.com

#### DAY 7

Watch gazelles roam free in the desert >







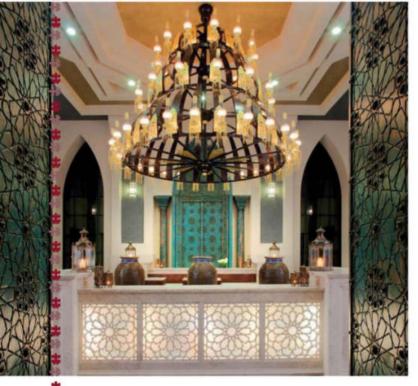


# KATARA HOSPITALITY, PRESERVING ICONIC TREASURES

There is much more to being a world-class hospitality organisation than just owning, managing or developing hotels. At Katara Hospitality, our appreciation for the past powers our aspirations for the future. Decades of experience,

an innovative mindset and meticulous attention to detail enable us to craft unique masterpieces that set new standards for others to follow. With us, it is all about our boundless passion for creating legendary hospitality, building on our heritage.

## **NIIRA** i



#### ■ from a hot air balloon

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Fly over orange and red sand dunes, spot camels, oryx and gazelles, watch the sun slowly rise, settle down for breakfast afterwards and then realise that the 4am wake up call was well worth it. ballooning.ae

#### Snorkel with 300 sharks

#### ■ in The Dubai Mall Aquarium

There are rays and turtles plus more than 70 different marine animals in Dubai Mall's gigantic aguarium. But fear not: snorkellers are protected within a cage. thedubaimall.com

#### Replenish your energy ■ at Souk Al Bahar

Mango Tree, Baker & Spice and Karma Kafe all offer fresh food in the windtower-heavy island resort, overlooking - but not within splashing distance - of the world's tallest dancing fountain. soukalbahar.ae

#### DRY S

Head for

#### ■ the desert!

Book your crew into a day-andnight luxury camp, featuring a 4x4 dune bash through the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve,

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a camel ride, falconry show, barbecue and even showers. arabian-adventures.com

#### A YAU

#### Check out

#### ■ world-class thoroughbreds up close

Book a place on a thrilling stable tour at the £1 billion racecourse and hotel Meydan. meydan.ae

#### Lunch at

#### ■ The Farm

It may not be an actual farm, but this destination café located on a private estate is one of Dubai's leafiest spots. The brownie is an absolute must. thefarmdubai.com

#### Dance at

#### ■ People by Crystal

The club at the tip of the Raffles

## CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

TALISE OTTOMAN SPA MAIN RECEPTION AT JUMEIRAH ZABEEL SARAY; WATERWAYS AND BOTANICAL GARDERNS SURROUND THE FARM: ARMANI HOTEL SIGNATURE

Dubai pyramid is full of corks popping, carefully made up beautiful people and surprise celeb appearances - no Dubai trip would be complete without a tongue-in-cheek taste of its VVVIP lifestyle.

peoplebycrystal.com

#### L YRL

#### Get out on the water with

#### ■ Surf House Dubai

Take an early morning surf lesson with the dudes at this beachside institution, or head out on a paddleboard. There can be few things lovelier than catching up with a friend as you slowly circumnavigate the Burj Al Arab by board. surfingdubai.com; thelimetreecafe.com

#### Drink at

#### ■ Jetty Lounge

An upmarket drinking spot on the sand, this is the bar of choice for events by top brands such as Moët & Chandon. royalmirage. oneandonlyresorts.com

#### Visit

#### ■ The World in a day

Head to The Island beach club (it's a World Island). theisland.ae



1. CLASSIC PANAMA HAT: £115, DRAKES.COM 2. DELAGE, DANDY CANVAS BAG, £575, +44 20 7792 4949 3. PETER MILLAR MENS SWIMMERS, £55, HARRODS COM A ORIGINAL UNIVERSAL GRADIENT SANDAL, £40, TEVA.CO.UK: 5. MASTERPIECE SQUARE WHEEL WATCH, £7.500 MAURICFLACROIX COM

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**WEEKEND STOPOVER** 

#### Check into

■ Armani Hotel Dubai, for its masculine style and balconies overlooking Dubai Fountain. dubai.armanihotels.com

#### Zoom up to

#### ■ At the Top, Burj Khalifa SKY

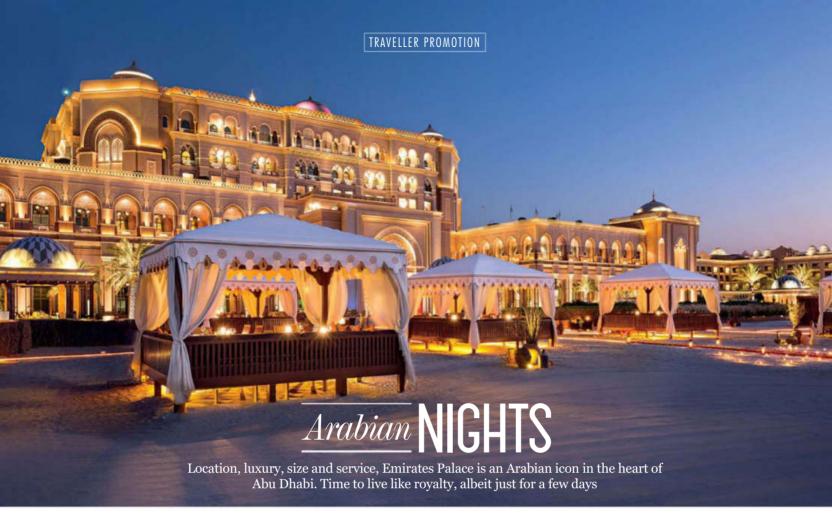
The highest observation deck inside the world's tallest building. On the 148th floor. burjkhalifa.ae

#### Strut down

■ Dubai Marina's buzzy new beach-mall strip, where all the action is (and the flashiest car parade). thebeach.ae

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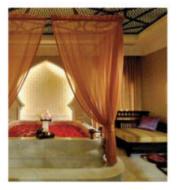






t the far western end of the Corniche, surrounded by 85 hectares of landscaped grounds and fronted by a sweeping private beach, Emirates Palace is ideally located in the centre of Abu Dhabi. It rises up like a huge fairytale Arabian palace, one that has become an Emirati icon and destination in itself. The exterior is staggering in size and intricacy, palatial yet traditional, with a mass of towering domes. Inside is no less impressive, adorned with gold, marble, crystal and satin, and kitted out with all the latest technology. The experience here goes way beyond five stars, this is a place to splash out and savour.

The rooms and suites are super-opulent with enormous beds; swish bathrooms and 24-hour butler service for every guest. There is an endlessness to the facilities including a glamorous ballroom, large auditorium and 14 restaurants and bars. The food is particularly impressive – a mouthwatering culinary journey that travels from the brilliant Italian Mezzaluna to Emirati cuisine at the exclusive Mezlai,



via sensational seafood at Sayad, contemporary Chinese at Hakkasan, al fresco dining at BBQ Al Qasr and traditional Lebanese food at the laidback Diwan L'Auberge. There are also bars aplenty for the most exquisite cognacs and cigars, and caviar and champagne.

As you would expect, the outside facility list is uber-impressive, featuring two huge swimming pools (one for adventure), tennis courts, a FIFA-standard football pitch, cricket pitch, two fitness centres and watersports galore. There is even bird watching. The Emirates Palace Spa also gets top marks for its array of indulgent revitalising packages that have the ability to transport you to another world. Whether you book a traditional Hammam ritual,

Clockwise from top: Emirates Palace beachside, al fresco dining at BBQ Al Qasr; The Emirates Palace Spa; Emirates Palace Marina

a customised gold-infused facial or a relaxing massage, the results speak for themselves. As palatial as its name suggests, Emirates Palace is one of those fantasy places where reality is suspended and lasting memories are created. The perfect happy ending.

For more information or reservations, please call +971 (0) 2 690 8888 or email reservations@emiratespalace.ae

#### Reader offer

Emirates Palace is offering Condé Nast Traveller readers a special rate of AED 1500\* per room per night including buffet breakfast for two at Le Vendôme. The rate is available for a minimum stay of three nights and is valid from 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2016. Terms and conditions apply. \*Rates are subject to 10% service charge and 6% tourism fee.





#### DRY 1 Check into

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#### ■ The St Regis Doha

The city's ultimate hotel, the Iuxurious St Regis in Doha is the only St Regis in the world to offer every quest their own private butler service. It is also home to a Gordon Ramsay restaurant, a branch of Hakkasan, and is situated next to Pearl Island. stregisdoha.com

#### ■ As much art as you can

Check out various types of art - fashion, anime, performance, multimedia and more - at Fire Station, an exciting creative arts space housed, as the name suggests, in a former fire station. You also mustn't miss the impressive Museum of Islamic Art, in a building designed by I M Pei, or QM Gallery Al Riwag which, last year, housed Damien Hirst's Relics. firestation.org.qa mia.org.qa/en

#### Take in the views at

#### ■ Sky View

La Cigale Hotel's stylishly designed rooftop bar sits on the 15th floor, with selfie-worthy

> ABOVE: DOHA-SARAB LOUNGE TERRACE AT ST REGIS, DOHA **LEFT: SUITE AT W DOHA**

views out across the Doha skyline and beyond it to the West Bay does scrumptious cocktails too. lacigalehotel.com

#### DRY 2 Brunch at

#### ■ The Four Seasons

A national pastime in Qatar (just as it is in any warm, expat-packed destination) brunching is taken very seriously here. The Four Seasons brunch experience has repeatedly been touted by local experts as the best of the bunch, with details such as 'Chef Wars' - where the hotel's best have a cook-off - and the temperaturespecific foie gras station giving it the edge. Book ahead. fourseasons.com/doha/dining

#### Then move onto

#### ■ The bars at W Doha Hotel & Residences

The place to be during any big Doha event, the W manages to be both a comfortable hotel and a chic nightspot. Flit between the purple-tinged Crystal Lounge inside and the Wahm Poolside Lounge, and whatever the weather, you won't miss out > **SIUK** CAPSULE

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1. BIARRITZ SUNGLASSES, £255, KIRKORIGINALS COM 2. ANITA KO EVIL EYE 18-KARAT ROSE GOLD, DIAMOND AND SAPPHIRE BRACELET, £12,000, NET-A-PORTER COM 3 DERBY BACKPACK, £725, HEMSLEYLONDON.COM 4. MINNETONKA SANDAL, £63.95, THENATURALSHOESTORE.COM 5. LATE OR NEVER JUMPSUIT, £125, THISISADAY



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ATLANTIS THE PALM, DUBAI



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#### UNWIND

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on any of the nightlife action. crystaldoha.com; wahmdoha.com

#### E YRI Be spellbound by the desert-scape

#### ■ Khor Al Udaid

Dune bash, jump down sand dunes or into natural blue pools, or, just rest your eyes on the striking scenery in one of the most spectacular areas of Qatar.

#### Dine at

#### ■ The Anvil Rooms

Tornado Tower's signature restaurant is very closely modelled on a New York steakhouse. Select a dish from the à la carte, or book a private room and meet with the chef to create a bespoke menu beforehand. theanvilrooms.ga

#### DRY 4 Take a photo at

#### ■ Katara Cultural Village

The largest cultural area in the country, Katara Cultural Village is a multi-tasking area that includes a beach, restaurants and cafés, an opera house and music academy plus a cinema and film institute. But architecturally most impressive is the amphitheatre be sure to sit a while and snap a few shots. Instagram gold. katara.net

#### See ancient petroglyphs ■ at Jebal Jassassiyeh

There are 900 pre-historic rock

carvings at Jebal Jassassiyeh, portraying boats, donkeys, scorpions, turtles and many other fascinating objects. If you can get your jaw off the floor, join Regency Travel and Tours for a tour of yet more cultural highlights elsewhere in Qatar. regencyholidays.com

#### DRY S

#### Revive your skin with pearls

#### ■ Remède Spa

The St Regis Doha is home to one of the most innovative spas

#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: SKYVIEW ROOFTOP BAR AT LA CIGALE HOTEL:

REMEDE SPA TREATMENT ROOM: JAZZ AT THE LINCOLN CENTER: POOLSIDE AT DOHA FOUR SEASONS

#### DRY 6

#### Explore

#### ■ abandoned fishing villages

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About 10 minutes from Zubarah Fort there is a pearl fishing village with a difference – it is completely unlived-in. Thought to have been built in the 17th-century, it still stands today but silently, only seeing curious visitors keen to find evidence of 'old Qatar'.

#### L YRU

#### Take a moon dhow cruise

#### ■ across Doha Bay

Board a traditional dhow cruise and



#### SELECT A DISH FROM THE À LA CARTE. OR BOOK A PRIVATE ROOM AND MEET WITH THE CHEF TO CREATE A BESPOKE MENU BEFOREHAND

in the Middle East - Remède (which means 'cure' in French). Its signature treatment is the extravagant cooling pearl facial, and all guests are given a complementary feet and hand paraffin treatment. remedespadoha.com

#### Dance at

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#### ■ Jazz at Lincoln Center Doha

With top jazz stars swinging in from around the world to perform here every month. Doha's Lincoln Center is one of the most exciting live music spots in the country. Load up on New York- and New Orleans-inspired bites from the menu before hitting the floor. Be cool man, be cool.

sail around Palm Tree Island to see Doha's skyline from afar, then dive into the water close to Al Safliya Island before drying off and tucking into a barbecue dinner buffet. Cruising's such hard work isn't it? qatar-ventures.com



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# **Dubai Duty Free**



Full of surprises.

#### DRY 1

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#### Stay at

#### ■ The Chedi Muscat

Arriving at this largely white, symmetrical hotel is like stepping into the pages of a glossy magazine (rather like the one you're reading). Don't miss the blissful 'quiet pool' and you shouldn't run out of options at the nine restaurants. ghmhotels.com/en/muscat/

#### Lunch at

#### ■ The Shangri-La Bar Al Jissah Resort & Spa

With a man-made tunnel through a mountain and a cliff-top location Bond himself would feel comfortable with. Muscat's Shangri-La is a quietly stunning treasure looking out over the Sea of Oman. Don't miss the roasted meats at Arabian restaurant Al Tanoor. shangri-la.com/muscat/ barraljissahresort/

#### Go on a dolphin-watching boat cruise with

#### ■ Oman Dive Centre

Hop into a boat from the beach at relaxed Oman Dive Centre (just next to the Shangri-La) and jet out to see pods of spinner, bottlenose and common dolphins - present in the Sea of Oman year-round. If you're lucky you'll even glimpse the odd Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin.

omandivecentre.com

#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

OLD MUTTRAH SOUK BAI CONY VIEW AT SHANGRI-I A RAR AI JISSAH RESORT & SPA-THE THREE HOTELS AND BEACH AT SHANGRI-I A BAR AL JISSAH RESORT



### arabia 3 DAYS IN JUNNU

#### DAY 2 Drive

#### ■ Wadi Bih

This mountain range with peaks of 1,000 metres straddles Ras Al Khaimah and Oman. The Wadi Bih road offers stunning views, fantastic birding, crumbling stone houses and lush green areas. Hire a 4x4, take your passport and never go before or after rain because of flash floods. And take a good map!

#### Shop in

#### ■ Old Muttrah Souk

Browse for Arabian-style teapots, gorgeous cashmere pashminas and oversized costume jewellery at Old Muttrah Souk in Muscat. Don't forget to haggle.



#### L YAL

#### Take a break from the real world at

#### ■ Six Senses Zighy Bay

Paraglide into this phenomenal, tucked-away eco-resort located in a bay only otherwise accessible by, yes, the trusty 4x4 (via a heartfluttering, winding mountain



**SIUK** CAPSUI

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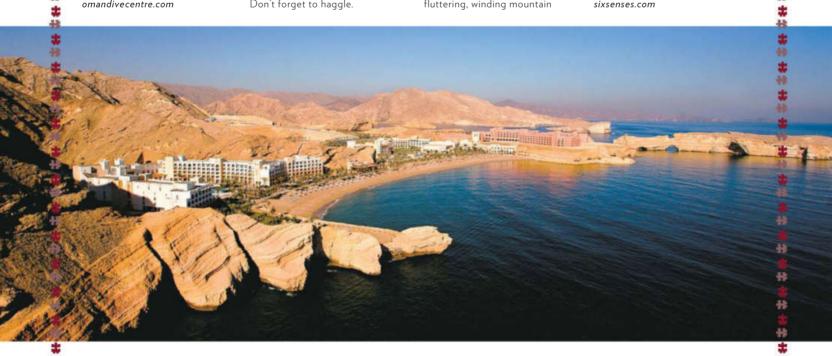
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5 THMI SHVER FRAMED BELLAGIO SHITCASE £600 AVAILABLE FROM HARRODS.COM 6. DIGITAL PIXELATED PRINTED JUMPER £750 PRINGLESCOTLAND COM

road). Enjoy organic spa treatments, borrow the mountain bikes, unwind on a sunset cruise or lounge by your pool (every villa has one). But, most importantly of all, adhere to the strict no-mobile-phone-inpublic-spaces rule. Bliss. sixsenses.com



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#### DRY 1 Stay at

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#### ■ Camel Dive Club & Hotel

Conveniently located in the centre of Sharm El Sheikh, Camel Hotel is a hideaway of cool calm amid the neon-lit party strip. The rooftop bar tends to be filled with glowing divers, excitedly swapping sealife-spotting stories and radiating health following a day spent underwater. cameldive.com

#### Experience

#### ■ the famed Blue Hole in Dahab

While beginners should start out with the Ras Ghazlani and Shark Reef sites first, more experienced divers should head straight for the Red Sea's most famous dive attraction, the Blue Hole, A vast. round 150-metre wide, 120-metre deep hole in the reef plate, it is one of only three such openings in the world. cameldive.com

#### Eat at

#### ■ Abou el Sid

This fun, colourful restaurant with cool interiors is apparently named after Al-Sayyed Abou el Sid, a famously fantastic cook who lived in Cairo during the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Try the authentic Egyptian cuisine, and pick one of the many specialities served 'the Abou el Sid' way such as roasted lamb with potato, onion and bell pepper or white beans tajin. abouelsid.com

#### DRYZ

#### Climb Mount Sinai on a camel

#### ■ and watch the sunrise

Hop on a camel at 5am and glide past dozens of other visitors on foot as you scale the famed 2.000-metre Mount Sinai. Stop at a tuckshop at the top for chai and chocolate, then spread a rug on a rock at the peak, and watch the sun's orange sphere scorch the sky into daylight – just as Moses was said to do. Unforgettable. sharmexcursions.com

#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

REEF DIVING WITH CAMEL DIVE CLUB; THE BAR AT ABOU EL SID: PYRAMIDS AT SUNSET

#### EYAL

#### Stay at

#### ■ The Kempinski Nile, Cairo

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Experience the Nile from one of its most stylish vantage points the rooftop pool at the Kempinski Cairo. Stunning, day or night. kempinski.com/en/cairo

#### See The Pyramids of Giza

#### on a tour with a local

Follow Moustafa – a local from 'the Mother of All Cities' - around the phenomenal Pyramids of Giza via the 'Airbnb of travel experiences', Vayable. vayable.com

#### Sail

#### on a felluca

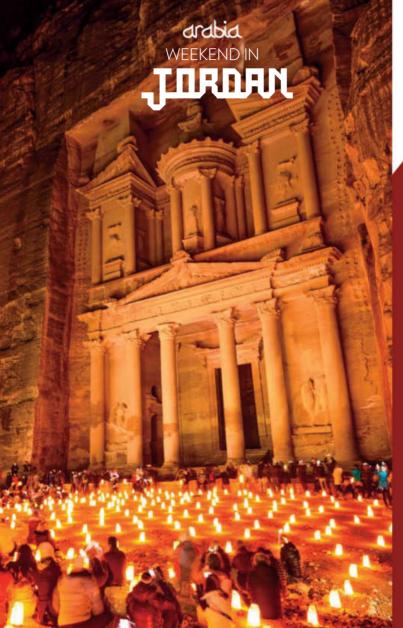
Since the time of ancient Egypt, the Nile has been dotted with fellucas - small, simple boats with tall white sails - and it remains so today. You can step onto one from Four Seasons Cairo at Nile Plaza and tuck into food and drinks - and even enjoy a fire dance, or, simply sit back and soak up the felluca's peaceful atmosphere. fourseasons.com







# TURDAN BAHRAIN



#### DRY 1 AND 2

Experience

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### ■ the overwhelming beauty of Petra

Book an every-detail-covered two-day tour of the awe-inspiring city of Petra cut into ancient stone, including pick up from Amman airport and time to bob about in the Dead Sea too.



#### E YRG

Stay at

# ■ Six Senses Evason Ma'In Hot Springs

A luxurious spa hotel built into the rocky mountains, this Six Senses spot offers adventurous, historic, family-friendly and religious experiences, as well as dozens of spa treatments using ingredients from the Dead Sea and Ma'ln Hot Springs. sixsenses.com

#### Ride a camel

#### across Wadi Rum

Experience Wadi Rum desert the way the Bedouin did (before 4x4s), atop a dromedary. This one-day tour includes a Bedouin lunch, as well as a stop at the ruins of the house thought to have been occupied by T E Lawrence during World War 1. wadirumnomads.com



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
THE CITY OF PETRA;
ART ROTANA, AMWAJ
ISLANDS; DROMEDARIES,
WADI RUM NOMADS
TOUR; LANDSCAPE
VIEW NEAR MAIN
HOT SPRINGS

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# arabia WEEKENDIN **BRHRRIN**

#### DRY 1

Stay at

#### ■ the ART Rotana

Every room at Bahrain's ART Rotana, located on the manmade Amwaj Islands, faces the sparkling Arabian Gulf, making it ideal for those seeking quiet time on the beach.

rotana.com

#### Have

#### ■ an outdoor massage

A cross between an Arabic palace and a European castle, La Fontaine Centre of Contemporary Art is more than 150 years old, and, along with an art centre, restaurant and Pilates studio, includes a spa where you can have your muscles gently kneaded during a dreamy alfresco massage.

lafontaineartcentre.net

#### **DRY 2**

Party

#### on Al Dar Island

Head to Al Dar Island (located



10 minutes from Manama by water taxi) for a day on the beach. Hang out in one of the new chalets, cook up a barbecue feast or venture out on a dolphin boat tour. You can sign up for a pearl collecting trip too. aldarislands.com

#### EYAL

Eat barbecue brunch

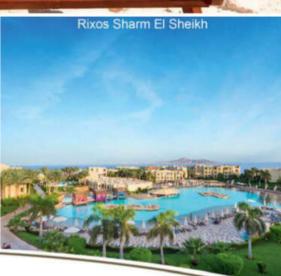
#### **■** poolside

Elements Pool & Lounge at the InterContinental Regency Bahrain serves up a mighty array of barbecued meats by the pool every Friday. Park your plate at a table or on one of the wonderfully decadent four-poster sunbeds. *intercontinental.com* 









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#### DRY 1

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#### Stay and eat at

#### ■ Fujairah Rotana Resort & Spa

Located on Al Aqah beach, the Fujairah Rotana Resort & Spa may be large but it still manages to retain its personality. Dine at the idyllic Waves Beach restaurant and go for sundowners at the rather romantic Sharkeys Bar. rotana.com

#### Swim through a shoal of tropical fish

#### ■ On a snorkelling trip with Al Boom Diving

Located just down the shore from Fujairah Rotana Resort & Spa, Al Boom Diving operates from Le

Meridien Al Agah hotel, running daily boat trips out past Snoopy Island (a large rock that looks like Snoopy snoozing on his back) into the Sea of Oman. Both divers and snorkellers typically see colourful tropical fish, reef sharks (the kind that don't bite people, thankfully) and sometimes even turtles. Al Boom also provides a minibus service to and from its Dubai centres. alboomdiving.com

WHITE-COLLARED

KHAIMAH

KINGFISHER IN RAS AL

#### See eerie black mountains as you drive out of Fujairah

The Hajar Mountains are dark, craggy and bizarrely mesmerising during a drive into or out of Fujairah, and look markedly unlike any ranges you might see

could even rent a camper van. europcar.com; campervanrent.com

#### **DRY 2**

#### Put your board shorts on and

#### ■ canoe through mangroves

Join a two- to three-hour paddling tour through the Khor Kalba lagoon on the outskirts of Sharjah near the Oman border. Watch out for herons, whitecollared kingfishers and turtles. Upgrade to enjoy a well-deserved lunch at the Fujairah Hilton. desertrangers.com

#### Visit a haunted palace ■ in Ras Al Khaimah

Do ghosts exist? Find out for yourself at Al Qasimi Palace, apparently abandoned by a sheikh some years ago due to strange occurrences inside it, such as furniture moving around by itself. A lone caretaker can show you around, if you're brave enough...

Labelled the world's best driving road, the Jebel Hafeet mountain range lies across Al Ain in the UAE and the Omani border, and rises to 1,250 metres above sea level. Don't miss the hot springs at the lush Green Mubazarrah, and plan in time at Wadi Adventure in Al Ain afterwards for man-made surfing and white-water rafting. Finish up at the Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet Al Ain Hotel. wadiadventure.ae; mercure.com

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Ideally located by the shores of the Arabian Gulf, Jumeirah Messilah Beach is the ideal getaway. This oasis of hospitality features over 300 rooms and suites, the state-of-the-art Talise Spa, and a host of outstanding leisure and dining choices. It's everything you could want in a seaside resort... and much more.

To make a reservation, call us at +965 2226 9600 or email us at jmbreservations@jumeirah.com For more information, visit jumeirah.com





24 September-2 October 2015

■ Eid Al Adha 2015\*

15 October 2015

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■ Hijri New Year's Day\*

15-17 October 2015

■ Jordan Rally (Motorsport) jordanrally.com

26-31 October 2015

■ Dubai Design Week

dubaidesigndistrict.com

3-7 November 2015

■ Samsung Beach Soccer Intercontinental (Dubai)

beachsoccer.com

11-20 November 2015

■ 37th Cairo Intl. Film Festival ciff.org.eg

18-21 November 2015

■ Abu Dhabi Art

abudhabiart.ae

2 December 2015

■ UAE National Day

3-5 December 2015

■ Dubai Rugby Sevens

dubairugby7s.com

9-16 December 2015

■ 12th Dubai International Film Festival

dubaifilmfest.com

24 December 2015

■ Prophet Muhammad's Birthday\*

January 2016

■ Dubai Shopping Festival mydsf.ae

February 2016

■ Wadi Bih run

premieronline.com

15-28 February 2016

■ Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

dubaidutyfreetennischampionships.com

24-26 February 2016

■ Emirates Airline Dubai Jazz **Festival** 

dubaijazzfest.com

8-12 March 2016

■ Emirates Airline Festival of Literature

emirateslitfest.com

16-19 March 2016

■ Art Dubai

artdubai.ae

24 March-3 April 2016

■ Bahrain 17th International **Book Fair** 

beca.bh

26 March 2016

■ Dubai World Cup

dubairacingclub.com

7-9 April 2016

■ Middle East Film and Comic Con (Dubai)

mefcc.com

24 April 2016

■ Bahrain Formula 1

gp-hub.com

5 May 2016

■ Israa & Miaraj Night, Ascension of the Prophet\*

21 June -21 September 2016

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■ Salalah Festival, Oman

www.salalahfestival.gov.om

6-8 July 2016

■ Eid Al Fitr\*

10 September 2016

■ Arafat Day\*

11-13 September 2016

■ Eid Al Adha\*

PLASTIC TREE C BY PASCALE MARTHINE TAYOU, SHOWN AT ART DUBAI 2015. COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND GALLERIA CONTIN

<sup>\*</sup>Islamic holiday exact dates are subject to moon sighting and may differ from date given.















# THEA DARRICOTTE uncovers your world ☐ HEALTH & BEAUTY

#### Elle Macpherson's latest venture, THE SUPER ELIXIR™

Nourishing Protein, is designed to kick-start sluggish metabolisms, slow down signs of ageing and de-stress our jet-set lifestyles. It's vegan-friendly and gluten-free, with ingredients including pea protein and Peruvian cacao. £48, welleco.com

# □ LUXURY ORDER

We are big fans of HALL, a new British jewellery brand run by Min Lee, a very talented and well-connected young lady who saw a gap in the market for accessible fine-fashion jewellery. Her designs are exquisite, often delicate and best worn together. Certainly one to watch. Hall-collection.com

#### ☐ HEALTH & BEAUTY

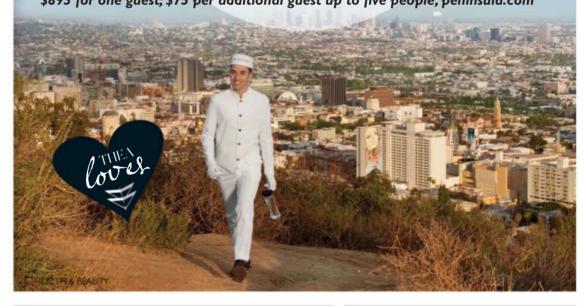


#### **OUT OF THIS WORLD**

This exquisite hand cream from Bonpoint is a new addition to its natural and hypoallergenic skincare line - suitable for grown-ups and little people alike. £31, bonpoint.com

#### UP AND OUT IN BEVERLY HILLS

Visiting California? Then why not train like a star by joining James Duigan's new fitness programme at The Peninsula Beverly Hills. It's been designed to help you get a lean, athletic body like Duigan's supermodel clients through his celebrated 'Clean & Lean' values and approach to total wellbeing. Your Bodyism trainer will guide you through a series of yoga-inspired stretches; then embark on a guided hike and fitness programme. You'll return to the hotel for a specially prepared lunch and a Serenity Shake before bedtime. You'll awake feeling invincible! \$895 for one guest; \$75 per additional guest up to five people, peninsula.com



THESE DIVINE BANGLES FROM **ASPREY** ARE THE PERFECT TRANS\_SEASONAL ACCESSORIES TO EASE YOU INTO AUTUMN IN STYLE. SINGLE OAK LEAF. BANGLE IN 18CT WHITE OR YELLOW GOLD WITH A PAVE DIAMOND OAK LEAF £4,200 each, asprey.com





#### **TOTES AMAZEBALLS**

This wonderfully tactile Shearling Peekaboo tote from Fendi is right on trend for A/W15 and simply begs to be taken on your next skiing holiday. £4,420, fendi.com





#### SHEAR ELEGANCE

Shearling is the hottest trend for A/W15 and this Small Roxette bag from Mulberry is a perfect example. The Small Roxette Shearling Rose Petal, £1,350, mulberry.com

#### Shop around

Fancy some retail therapy? The **Dorsett**Shepherds Bush hotel is currently offering
a Shop in Style package which includes
accommodation in a deluxe room, English
breakfast and a VIP Shopping Pass to
Westfield London. £199 per night,
dorsetthotels.com

#### MCQUEEN'S NEW REIGN

Alexander McQueen's A/W15 collection is powerful femininity at its best. This Teint cashmere double-breasted coat will add a welcome splash of colour to the dark winter nights.

£3,875, alexandermcqueen.com

☐ TRAVEL

#### ART OF THE CITY

If you're travelling to London for Frieze Art Week this month, make sure to visit the **Bulgari Hotel & Residences** in Knightsbridge. Stuart Semple will be painting a unique 127-metre-long artwork documenting his experience during his stay at the hotel, in the form of a giant lyrical mind map that will glow at night. He will also be creating an exclusive set of limited-edition handmade screens for purchase by any budding collector.

Bulgarihotels.com





#### IN THE FAST LANE

The Grand Cherokee SRT® has everything you could desire from a range-topping sports SUV. With its luxurious interiors, a 6.4 V8 Litre HEMI engine to take you from 0-62mph in five seconds and carbon-fibre trim along with cutting-edge technology, it will impress wherever you go.

The Jeep Grand Cherokee range is available from £38,895, with the SRT V8 HEMI (shown) priced from £63,995, jeep.co.uk

☐ HEALTH & BEAUTY

Till I

#### **SUPER SONIC**

The Mini Luna<sup>™</sup> brush by Foreo is perfect for on-the-go cleansing, taking just one minute to cleanse the whole face from dirt, oil and make-up residue – being non-porous, it is a more hygienic cleanse than standard sonic brushes.

£99, urbanretreat.co.uk





The new Lismore
Connoisseur range
from **Waterford** has a
variety of tumblers and
decanters, each crafted
with a different whisky
drinker in mind. These
Straight Sided Tumblers
are for anyone who
prefers to enjoy their
dram with a splash of
water, a dash of soda or
an ice cube or two.

£65 for a pair, Waterford.co.uk



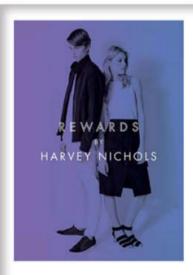
THE GRILL AT THE DORCHESTER IS HOSTING A SERIES OF WINE DINNERS: THE FIRST WILL BE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PRESTIGIOUS DUVAL

LEROY FAMILY ON THE 24 SEPTEMBER AND WILL PAIR A FIVE-COURSE MENU WITH SIX CAREFULLY CHOSEN CHAMPAGNES. WWW.DORCHESTERCOLLECTION.COM



Looking for a luxury beach home in Brazil? Villa Greda on the north-eastern Discovery Coast has seven bedrooms and incredible views while also being positioned up on a bluff away from any immediate neighbours. With two swimming pools, a cinema and snooker room and one of Bahia's top chefs serving up delicious local meals, you'll never want to leave.

Prices from £8,100 per week in low season, villagreda.com



Harvey Nichols Rewards is a state-of-the-art loyalty app that rewards shoppers for every pound they spend in the UK in store or online. Customers will have access to benefits from day one and the further you climb up the points ladder the more spectacular and unique your Rewards will be.

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SEVEN NIGHTS FROM \$1.990 PER PERSON BASED ON FULL OCCUPANCY INCLUDING FLIGHTS, LUXURY
COACH TRANSFERS, PRIVATE SCOTT DUNN CHEF, HOST AND ACCESS TO RESORT DRIVER. Scottdunn.com



#### ☐ HEALTH & BEAUTY

#### **Smooth move**

Home-beauty treatments are an increasingly popular option, and the Tria Beauty Age-Defying Laser has been getting some impressive results. The fractional non-ablative laser technology safely treats signs of ageing by smoothing fine lines and wrinkles, reducing pigmentation and improving texture. £450, triabeauty.co.uk





#### Pillow talk

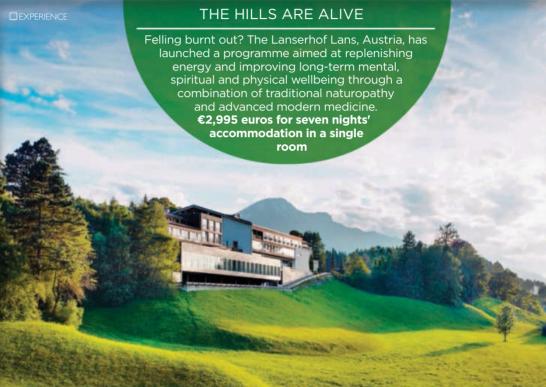
The best way to get your beauty sleep is with the Beauty Bear™ Age Delay Pillow from Nurse Jamie. Its U-shape design cradles the face and neck, and its smooth satin finish will support your skin and minimise line-impressions.

£46, net-a-porter.com



#### Work out in style

This month sees the relaunch of Lululemon's famous 'pant wall' which has honed in on five sensations: tight, hugged, held-in, naked and relaxed to ensure you find the pants that feel right for you while you exercise. To celebrate, it has also launched three new styles and fabrics which look just as great as they feel to wear. Lululemon.co.uk



The new Smart Profile brush from Clarisonic incorporates smart microchip technology in both the device and the brushheads to automatically adjust the timing and power for a customised body cleanse at the push of a button.
£199, clarisonic.co.uk



#### ☐ HEALTH & BEAUTY



#### **MAKE MINE A MIMOSA**

Jo Malone's latest fragrance is a romantic haze of golden mimosa, crushed cardamom, creamy tonka and smooth sandalwood which blend together to create a warm but exotic scent – ideal for transporting you to the Orient on a windswept British day. Mimosa & Cardamom Cologne 30ml £42, jomalone.co.uk

### Träveller

#### **Dream Destinations EUROPE-UK**



TITCHWELL MANOR.A stone's throw TITCHWELL MANORA stone's throw from the North Norfolk coast, boutique hotel Titchwell Manor is a stunning country retreat, combining traditional values with chic accommodation. Boasting 3 Rosettes, dine in one of the hotel's two restaurants; The Conservatory and Eating Rooms. For more information please visit www.titchwellmanor.com or call 101485 210 221



call 01485 210 221

SILVERHOLME is a beautiful Georgian Manor House in the Lake District. Set on the 5,000 acre Graythwaite Estate, with sweeping gardens down to Lake Windemere Silverholme provides an air of relaxed lozury with a stylish blend of period character and modern design. The house sleeps 18. For more information visit www.graythwaitc.com or email silverholme@graythwaite.com



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SCARISTA HOUSE, winner of the 2015 Good Hotel Guide Editors' Choice Award, is an elegant small hotel overlooking one of the most beautiful beaches on the remote Hebridean Isle of Harris. Guests enjoy traditional comfort in elegantly furnished rooms and natural, skilled cooking and good wines in the intimate restaurant. Visit www.scaristahouse.com or call 01859 550238.







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LLANGOED HALL is a beautiful country house hotel nestled into the Wye River Valley. Enjoy this tranqui setting within Laura Ashley inspired interiors and treat yourself to an award-winning culinary experiencel Llangoed Hall is the ideal venue - whether it be for a special venue – whether it be for a special occasion such as a wedding, or even just for a weekend escape into serenity. 01874 754525 www.llangoedhall.com enquiries@llangoedhall.com



The Sunday Times Country House Hotel Of the Year 2014-2015 Three AA Rosettes for Culinary Excellence 2014-2015 The AA Four Red Star Property The AA Notable Wine List



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THE ROYAL PAVILION TOWNHOUSE HOTEL metres away from Brighton's world famous promenade and beach, provides the perfect base from which to explore one of England's most vibrant crites. The early 19th-century building is situated in a beautiful Regency square, and the luxurious interiors make this a hotel well worth a visit. For more information call: 0.1273/47685 or www.pribrotel.co.u.

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#### Dream Destinations **EUROPE**



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RESIDENZA TORRE COLONNA is a beautiful guest house nestled in a defensive tower built in 1247, found in the bustling heart of Rome. Thanks to its unique blend of modern luxury and medieval history, combining boulique rooms and excellent service, the property is itself a priceless piece of the Roman transition of the Roman



HOTEL V... Hotel V... offers 12 stylishly decorated guestrooms that combine historical ambiance with contemporary amentities. The casual elegance of this boutique hotel makes it the perfect place for relaxing while visiting Vejer de la Frontera, one of the most charming and authentic "white villages" of Andalusis. Visit: www.hotelv-vejer.com Email: info@hotelv-vejer.com Tel: +34 956 45 17 57



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COURTYARD is an intimate, exclusive hote in Kalkan, Turkey. It is just a stroll away from the beautiful pebbly town beach and a wonderful range of restaurants, bars and shops. The buildings have been beautifully restored provide six unique bedrooms, each with their own personality and style. Visit www.courtyardkalkan.com or call +90 242 844 3738.



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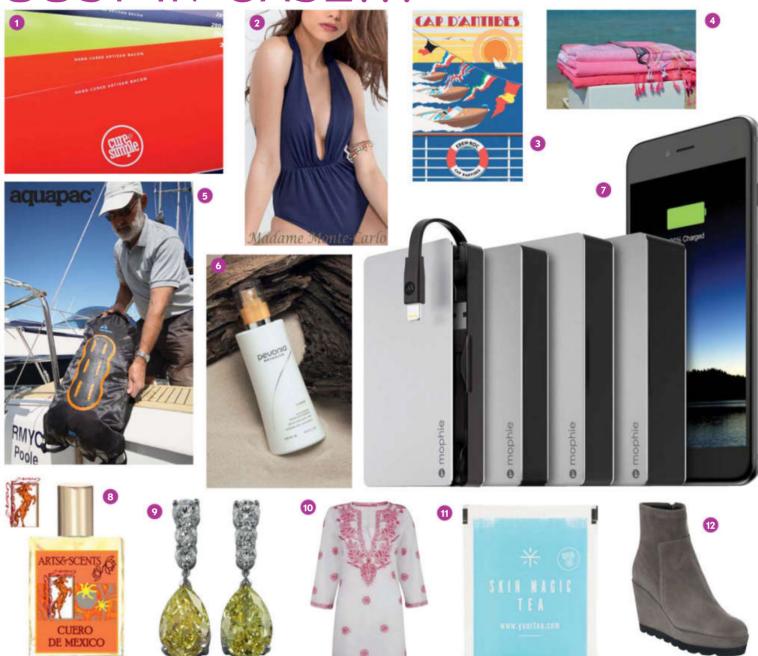
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  10. BEACHCOVER create exquisite hand-embroidered beach kaftans for style conscious women and children. Available in sizes 6-22 and children's age 2-12. Looking for something a little different for your next holiday? Visit their website www.beachcover.com or call 01189 404120 for more information.
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15. NALU BEADS. The Original Surf Beads are inspired by the distinctive colours of the beaches and surf spots around the world they represent, but also by a tradition that stems from the roots of modern day surfing. Each bead is individually handmade using the finest Murano glass, view the growing collection at www.nalubeads.com

16. STRAX. Run out of memory on your iPhone or iPad? Leef iBridge is the iOS mobile storage solution designed to easily expand the storage capacity on your iPhone, iPad and iPod without ever worrying about deleting memories again. Safely backup photos and videos or enjoy your entire movie or music library without having to take up a single MB of space on your iOS device. Available at The Carphone

Warehouse, Tesco and Argos. For further details contact 01923 852923.

17. ARCUS ACCESSORIES is a British fashion accessories store, offering the foremost in design and style. With a gorgeous range of both unique and contemporary fashion watches,

bracelets and rings they are leading the way in boutique fashion accessories, visit www.arcusaccessories.co.uk

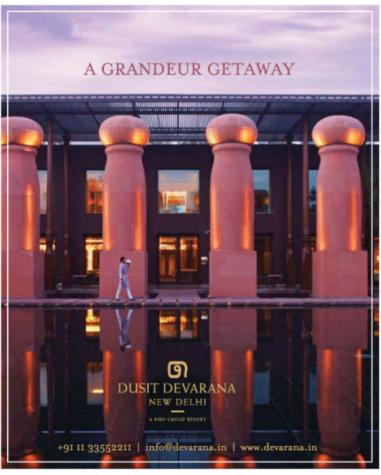
18. PACHACUTI's commitment to stylish and sustainable design is exemplified through its collection of Fair Trade Panama Hats which can roll and pack away for travel. 10% off and free shipping by using this code: CNTraveller, expires 30/12/2015. Visit www.panamas.co.uk or contact us on hats@panamas.co.uk

19. BLUEMINT. This Summer is going to be different from all the rest. With its extensive designs, patterns and vibrant colours, Bluemint beachwear offers a breath of fresh air. Bluemint meets the consumer with its accessible prices and varied range at www.bluemint.com contact info@bluemint.com

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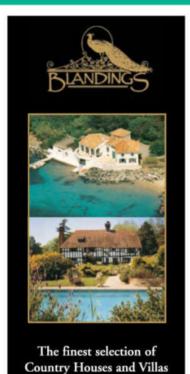
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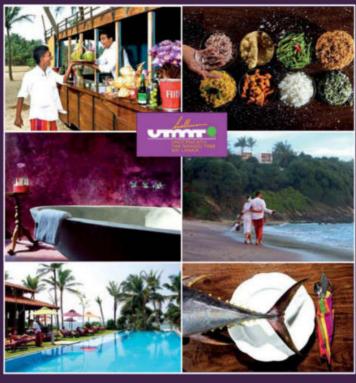




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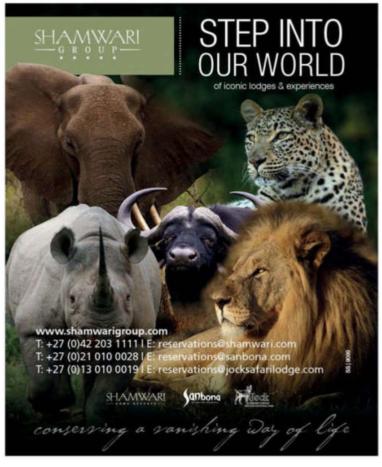
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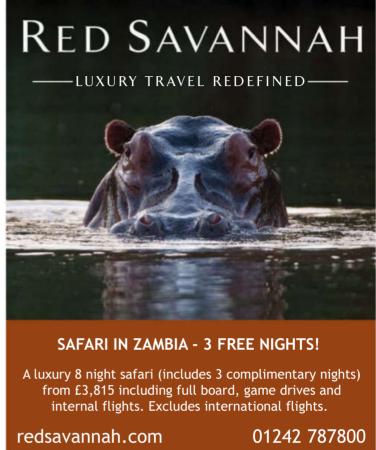


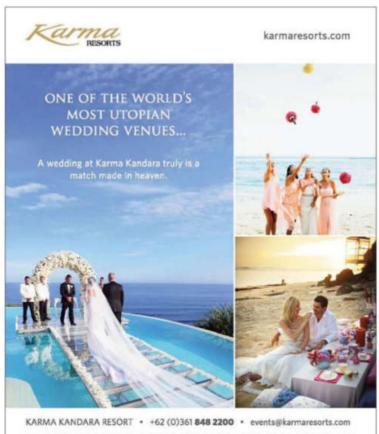


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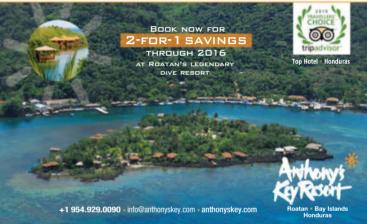


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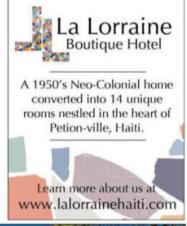
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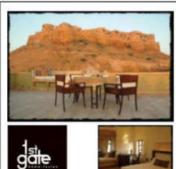
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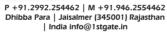


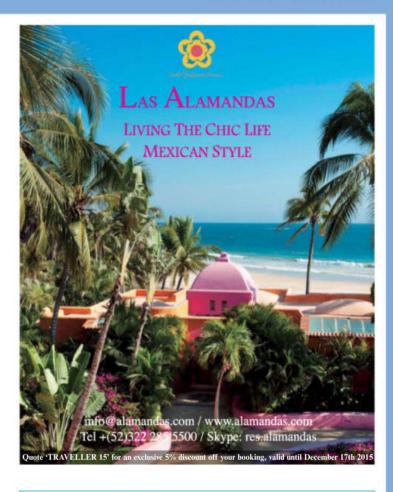














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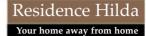


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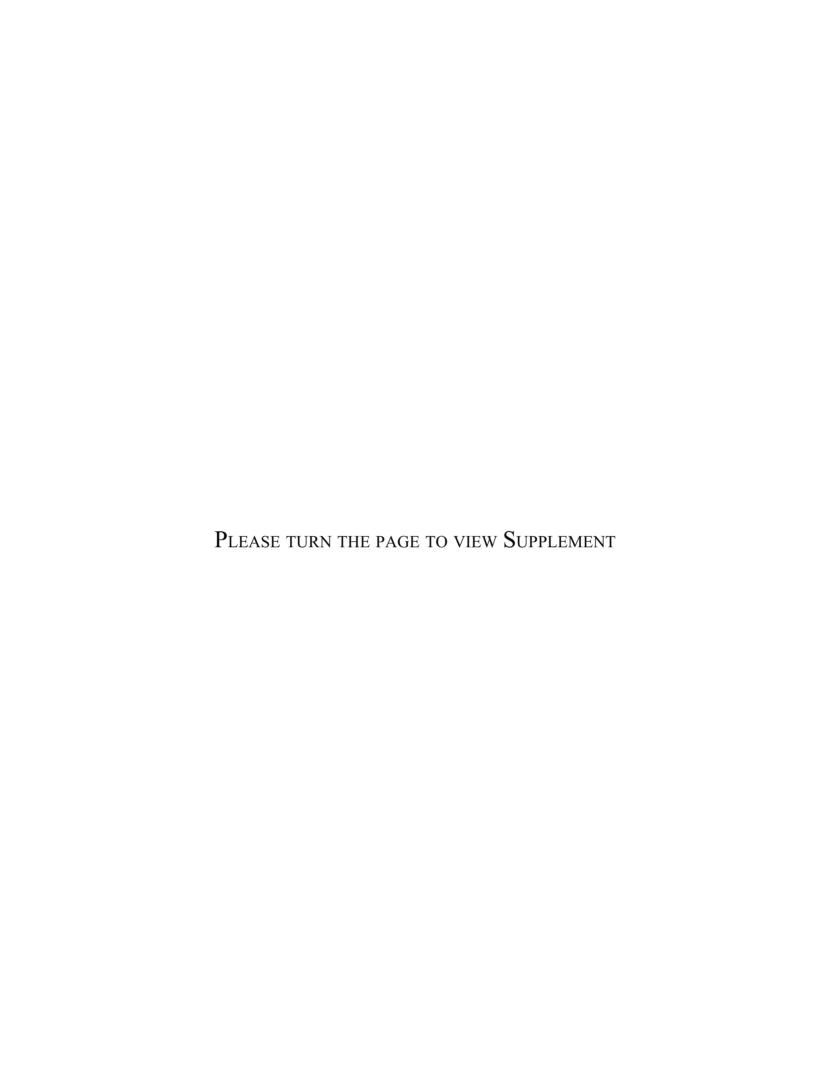


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AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES





### A New York Minute isn't measured in seconds. It's measured in firsts.

In 1853, Charles Tiffany erects a clock outside of Tiffany & Co.

He does it before public clocks are mainstays.

He does it because he understands the city he loves.

And with that simple gesture, something
remarkable happens. All of New York actually sets its
watches to the Tiffany clock. And Charles Tiffany
finds that he's not only set the time for New York, he has set
its very pace. One the rest of the world tries to follow.

### In 2015, Tiffany & Co. introduces another first the Tiffany CT60.

A watch named for the man who gave New York the gift of time.

A watch made in Switzerland but inspired by New York.

A watch you want to hold because it feels the way a watch should feel.

Real. And right. And important. A watch that lives up to
the city that inspired it. After all, any watch can wrap around a wrist.

Only one can wrap around New York.

Tiffany & Co. understands the New York Minute.

We respect the New York Minute.

We believe in the New York Minute.

We should. We invented it.

Introducing Tiffany CT60°.

From the Inventors of the New York Minute.





### AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES



Earlier this year I sat next to a man at a wedding who was wearing the new Apple watch. He'd set it using some wizardry so that every time his football team scored a goal, it vibrated to let him know. As his team were doing rather well, our conversation was punctuated by these cattle-prod moments. He couldn't believe how brilliant this was: a watch that told him the football score! And this, despite the fact that another guest was live-streaming the game on his mobile phone and was about 10 seconds ahead of him. The dénouement came when I asked him the time. As he swung out his arm to turn on the watch, he knocked over my wine glass – straight into my lap. To happier moments, and Cartier's high-jewellery launch on the French Riviera, a suitably lavish affair that involved private islands and helicopters and Picasso's house. I decided to wear (in a slightly teacher's pet kind of way)

my 1970s Must de Cartier Tank, a beautiful tablet of yellow gold with a navy dial. Contrary to some people's opinion I don't own a lot of watches, as my greatest occupational hazard is regular exposure to very expensive things, which has shifted my taste irreparably skywards. But this little beauty was just affordable. As Pierre Rainero, Cartier's director of style and heritage, was showing me the jewellery, he noticed my wrist. 'Aaah,' he said, 'a vintage Must. It's a great little watch.' Smug doesn't even cover how pleased I was with myself at that moment. 'Pierre,' I felt like saying, 'my work here is done.' Next up: the publisher of a design and interiors magazine, who I've known for years. It's fair to say he has a good idea of the breadth of watches out there, and that his tastes are more Minotti than Ikea. Occasionally I see him wearing a classic Rolex, an Oyster Perpetual given to him for a significant birthday. But mostly, he wears a Swatch – a black, scuffed and scratched, plainer-than-plain model that he's owned for nearly 10 years, which costs less than £35. Of course, the price is irrelevant: it's the functionality and simplicity he loves. So what does all this show? It's that there's a timepiece out there for everyone – whether Gooner or watch editor. This is Condé Nast Traveller's second edition of 'Around the World in 80 Watches'. Here's hoping one might catch your eye.

### Jessica Diamond WATCH & JEWELLERY EDITOR

### CONTRIBUTORS



Christopher Marley Artist, cover and Madagascar (page 30). The Oregon-based model turned collector works with exotic natural artefacts, such as gems, fossils, shells and insects. His career has taken him to more than 30 countries, including Chile, Indonesia, Malaysia, Morocco, Mexico and Japan. His 2015 book, Biophilia, is a New York Times bestseller.



Robin Swithinbank
Writer, Great Britain (page 50).
A specialist watch journalist for more than 10 years, Robin edits the magazine Calibre and contributes to the International New York Times, Financial Times and The Times. He has travelled from Switzerland to Svalbard, with a highlight in the last year being a trip to Beijing for the inaugural Formula E race.



Magnus Torsne
Photographer, 'Toy Story'
(page 38). As an expert prop
builder with his own workshop
in the heart of Stockholm,
Magnus combines photographic
skills with model building. His
pictures have appeared in
Vanity Fair and Elle, and he has
visited New York, Los Angeles,
Paris, Florence, Copenhagen,
Berlin and Cape Town for work.



Steve King Writer, USA (page 19). In researching his article, Condé Nast Traveller's editor at large sailed with Oracle Team USA, the defending America's Cup champion. 'The sensation of foiling above the water at more than 30 knots with some of the finest yachtsmen ever to squeeze into a onesie-helmet combo was quite indescribable,' he says.

ON THE COVER: DIOR VIII GRAND BAL PIECE UNIQUE IN WHITE GOLD WITH SAPPHIRES, DIAMONDS AND SCARAB MARQUETRY, POA, DIOR (WWW.DIOR.COM)



### RICHARD MILLE

### RICHARD MILLE BOUTIQUES LONDON





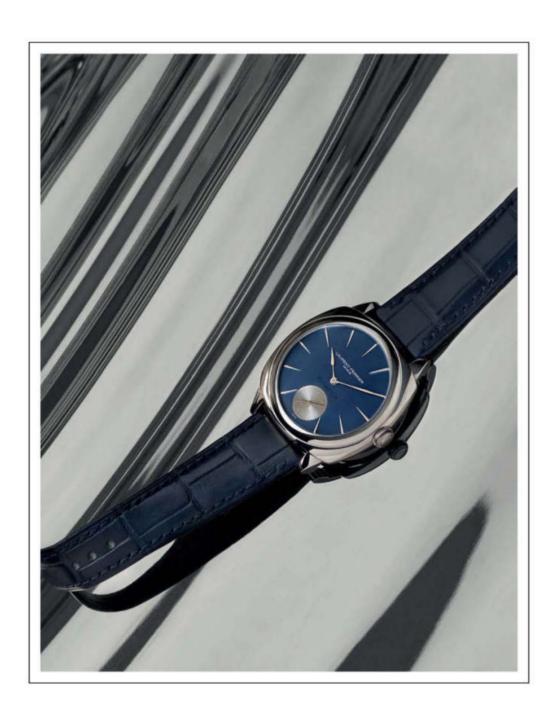
#### IWC Portofino Automatic Moon Phase 37. Ref. 4590:

As early as the 1950s and 60s, the stars of the silver screen fell in love with a small town on the Italian Riviera that was soon to become world-famous: Portofino. The picturesque fishing village's incomparable charm and the stories that grew up around it have ensured that it retains the magic and cachet that attract stars and celebrities to the Italian *dolce vita* – the good life – to this day. Every Portofino watch recaptures the glamour of both past and present. For the first time ever, this feeling for life is radiated by the slightly smaller IWC Portofino Automatic Moon Phase 37,

whose grace and elegance are reflected in every detail: in the polished surfaces of the case, for instance, which not only contributes to the watch's luxurious appearance but is also an expression of our craftsmanship. The overall precision is reflected once again in the wonderful moon phase display and in the pure white diamonds that grace the white mother-of-pearl dial. With its consummate beauty, this Portofino encapsulates the timeless, unhurried charm of southern Europe. It could almost have been made especially for life's most precious moments, for those times we look back on with infinite fondness.



IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN



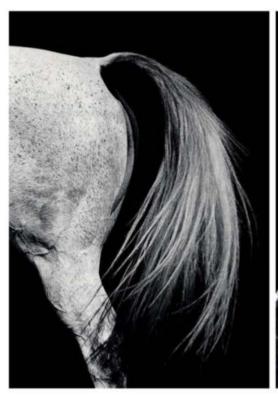


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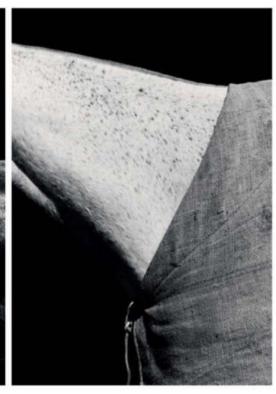
LONDON

# AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES ST TROPEZ THE WHINNY TAKES IT ALL Riding high on the French Riviera On a hot, breezy summer evening at the Polo Club in St Tropez, the sky is streaked rosé-pink by the sinking sun. It's the finals of the Polo Masters Open de Gassin and the air is thick with the sounds of clashing mallets, the thwack of wood on ball and the testosterone-fuelled shouts of the players. Beautiful ponies with coats the colour of liquorice kick up red dust as they turn on a sixpence. An excitable commentator gives a running report in a hybrid of French, Spanish and English: 'Vamos Diego. Hit the ball. Allez!' October 2015 Watch Special 11

# ST TROPEZ







This is how polo rolls on the highly sociable Côte d'Azur, and between turbocharged chukkas the atmosphere is fun, laid-back and not at all buttoned-up. Spectators sip glasses of icy blush under the shade of oak trees. Men are dressed in crisp linen shirts and suede loafers; women in wedge heels and crochet dresses. Children race about. Everyone wears a Panama hat. The polo club was established here 17 years ago in a forest-ringed setting between St Tropez and the white sands of Pampelonne, where happily soused diners dance on tables at lunchtime in famous beach haunt Le Club 55. But this year, in an effort to attract even more high-goal teams and become one of the best clubs in Europe, it has really upped its game with four new polo fields, a training track and 286 extra stables. Throwing its weight behind the club is a big hitter from the watch world, Richard Mille, which has been the official time-keeper and sponsor here for three years. The Swiss brand is known for its innovative, technically supreme timepieces that can withstand extreme sports, such as the bruising battles of the polo field. It's not about making timepieces that just look good while you're watching the game but about crafting ones that are stylish, accurate - and will survive - while you're playing it. To test the endurance of its designs, the company has worked with Pablo MacDonough, a 10-goal Argentinian star, since 2012 (to put his calibre in context, there have only been 25 10-goal players since the polo handicap system was introduced in 1890). The brand then developed the RM 053, a sophisticated and very precise watch that could endure a high-impact game in which heavy wooden balls fly through the air at 125 miles per hour. MacDonough has fallen from a horse and had his arm trapped under a hoof, and come up with wrist - and watch - intact. The Argentinian is a regular visitor to the French Riviera club, where every year since its involvement Richard Mille has released a limited-edition Polo Club St Tropez watch. This year, for the first time, there is also a ladies' model, the RM 07-01, which has a lapis-lazuli dial as deep-blue as the Med and a sporty white ceramic case and rubber strap. With an in-house-designed skeletonised movement and a 50-hour power reserve, it is one of the highest performance women's watches ever made by the company. The sleek-looking men's model, the RM 029, comes in a run of just 50 and has a black ceramic and carbon case engraved with the Polo Club St Tropez logo on the back. This August, the club held its first high-goal tournament, the Richard Mille Cup, drawing world-class players and lively crowds to its leafy grounds. It seems that Swiss precision and French joie de vivre make a very happy pairing. GRAINNE McBRIDE





# PIAGET



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# AFRICA

### ROAR POTENTIAL

Track the trend of safari-ready camouflage and khaki

It takes a certain bravery and confidence to launch a watch collection centred on a specific theme. And more so if said launcher is a high-end fashion house: forays into the watch arena from non-horological companies are often met with sniffy derision. Fashion behemoth Ralph Lauren first entered the watch world in 2008, partnering with luxury group Richemont to produce a credible range defined by an aesthetic as sharp as the designer's tailoring. When looking for some in-house inspiration, the newly founded watch division wasn't short on references:

American preppy, Gatsby-esque flapper, Navajo, nautical luxe, tweedy aristo and glossy equestrian just a few of the riffs that were up for reinterpretation. But safari, with all its romantic connotations (mixed with a dash of utilitarian style), had long been used by Ralph Lauren through his fashion, interiors and fragrance lines – first appearing in a clothing collection in 1984 – making it well suited to a reintroduction as part of the watch range in 2013. Today, the RL67 Safari Chronometer sits in a sweet spot where sports watch meets everyday timepiece, its blackened stainless-steel case that ages over time lending it rugged good looks (said to have been insisted upon by Ralph Lauren when he wore a prototype on safari that became suitably bashed about). This year's two new additions see a change to the dial, available in either khaki or a camouflage pattern – both a considered nod to their fashion origins mixed with an outdoor aesthetic. Alligator straps in brown or olive green come with each model, although purists might be tempted to opt for the

canvas version, which has been aged to mimic the tones of a sun-faded tent. JD

RL67 SAFARI 45MM CHRONOMETER, £2,490, RALPH LAUREN (WWW. RALPHLAUREN.CO.UK) RL67 SAFARI 45MM CHRONOMETER, £2,660, **RALPH LAUREN**, AS REFORF









For lunch it's Markthalle 9 in Kreuzberg, which has a great atmosphere and serves delicious food. For dinner, I'd recommend Long March Canteen, which specialises in dim sum: steamed, grilled, fried – you name it. I love Chinese food when it's served authentically like this.'

### TOP INSIDER TIPS?

'The best place for coffee is Five Elephant on Reichenberger Strasse. For a really good bookstore go to Do You Read Me?! on Auguststrasse, and Galerie König just has to be seen – especially the exhibition space in the old 1960s church. You'll also find beautiful vintage furniture at Original In Berlin on Karl-Marx-Allee.'

#### ONE TO WATCH?

'Definitely the concept store Andreas Murkudis on Potsdamer Strasse. It has the best selection of fashion and accessories in the city, as well as the new C/O Berlin gallery, which recently relocated to Amerika Haus and shows the perfect mix of work by young up-and-coming photographers and established names including Annie Leibovitz and Peter Lindbergh.'









### AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES

### USA

### LOOK SHARP

A very English angle on the America's Cup

For a few happy seasons as a child my greatest joy was to race snub-nosed, red-sailed, plodding little Mirror-class dinghies. Then, suddenly, I forgot about sailing - and I have remained largely forgetful of it ever since. However, it all came flooding back the other day when I joined Nick and Giles English, the brothers behind the Bremont watch company, in Portsmouth, where several of the boats that will compete for the 2017 America's Cup were being put through their paces. Not only have the two partnered with Larry Ellison's all-conquering Oracle team, they have signed up to oversee the timing of the entire event. Well, good luck to them. Because you know what they say about time flying? It turns out to be true in more ways than one. Since I stopped paying attention to the America's Cup back in the early 1980s, practically everything about the sport has changed. Today's boats are hardly boats at all. They don't so much sail as fly. Indeed, the rigid mainsail that rises from the twin hulls as proud as the feather in an Indian chief's headdress is known as a wing. They rise out of the water and take to the air. In Portsmouth I saw gruff, grizzled old sea dogs reduced to tears of joy by these \$10 million carbon-fibre contraptions. Bremont specialises in high-spec mechanical pilots' and military watches. But boats have never been far from the brothers' minds - a few years ago they produced a watch that included wooden fragments of HMS Victory - and these newfangled racing vessels are basically planes anyway. (Jimmy Spithill, skipper for team Oracle, got a pilot's licence in order to figure out how to handle the boat better.) Naturally the brand has produced a set of timepieces to mark its partnership with Oracle and the quest for the Auld Mug. 'Everything we do is about combining old traditions and new materials,' said Nick. He also pointed out that Bremont will be the first British brand to time the race since 1851. 'The year it all began,' he said, casting his eyes towards the watery horizon. 'Right



ORACLE WITH RED RUBBER STRAP, £3,995, BREMONT, (WWW.BREMONT.COM)



ORACLE II IN TITANIUM, £4,395, **BREMONT**, (AS BEFORE) here on the Solent.' SK







WE'VE NEVER BUILT A WATCH FROM THIS KIND OF STEEL BEFORE. BUT IT SEEMED TO WORK OUT OKAY ON THE F/A-18 SUPER HORNET.

A few years ago the British watch manufacturer Bremont and American aviation giant Boeing, embarked on a development project to build a range of mechanical timepieces that embraced the latest in material and manufacturing research from the worlds of horology and aviation. The result is something remarkably special.

**BREMONT** 





### ADRENALIN RUSH

Set your own pace amid the frenzied speed of the city

In a jiffy, quick as a flash, blink of an eye, a split second: all commonly used expressions for the quickest moments in time. And now with the launch of the CT60 by Tiffany & Co, we are reminded of the 'New York minute', a frenetic instant or fleeting moment that captures the urgent, organised chaos of New York City – aptly described by Johnny Carson as, 'The interval between a Manhattan traffic light

turning green and the guy behind you honking.' But it has morphed from its original meaning, which is said to have been coined by the jewellery house's founder, Charles Lewis Tiffany. In his era, the New York minute summed up 60 seconds of pure possibility and ambition, embodied by his eponymous label in the mid-19th century as it forged ahead towards the Jazz Age with ideas for design, retail and luxury. The CT60 pays tribute to

Tiffany's contribution to this horological landscape and neatly reminds everyone that while Tiffany & Co is best known for its sleek fine-jewellery collections, timekeeping is an

CT60 CALENDAR WATCH IN ROSE GOLD WITH GOLD POUDRE NUMERALS, £5,475, **TIFFANY & CO** (WWW.TIFFANY.CO.UK)

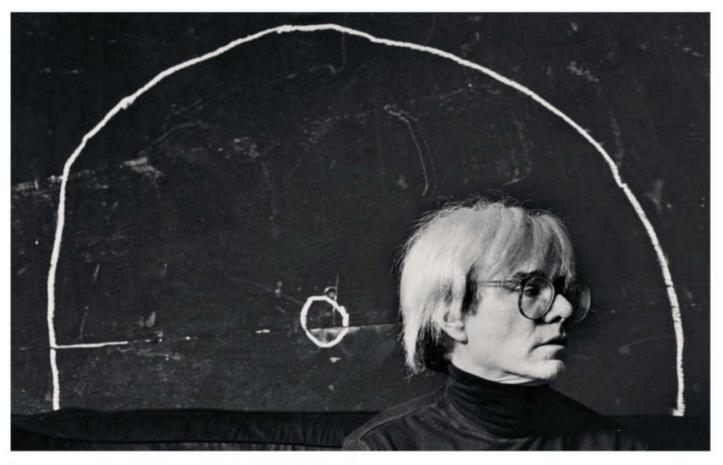
important part of this brand's history: in 1853 Tiffany unveiled the nine-foot Atlas clock on top of his flagship store on Fifth Avenue. As one of the few public clocks of its day – and before wristwatches were widely available – it helped keep the city running on time. The CT60's aesthetic is not ground-breaking, but rather a gentle riff on the

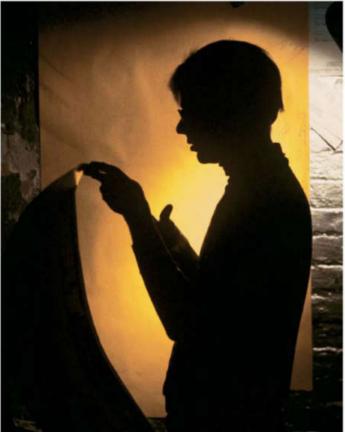
Tiffany watch presented to Franklin D Roosevelt in 1945, with characteristic Art Deco simplicity. And after a short hiatus from the serious watch market, it seems fitting that Tiffany has re-evaluated its time-keeping archive in this considered way. As an Eighties hit by country-music singer Ronnie McDowell has it, 'I'd make love to you in a New York minute, and take my Texas time doing it.' JD



### AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES

### NEW YORK





### POP GOES THE BEZEL

Andy Warhol gives edge to a 1970s-style modern-day release

With vintage watches so hot at auction, it seems sensible that most houses, including Cartier and Piaget, now have dedicated departments focused on buying back their heritage. As well as helping to preserve a brand's legacy, it can also be a useful exercise when picking up references for new collections. In 1988, a year after Andy Warhol's death, Sotheby's New York held a sale of his personal effects. The combined lots sold for more than \$25 million and generated huge amounts of publicity and interest - not least from Piaget, which knew that a number of its watches would go under the hammer. Warhol owned at least 10 of its timepieces, having identified closely with the brand's aesthetic. Several watches were reacquired and stored in Piaget's private collection. And now some in-house research has produced one of this year's most evocative relaunches. A Warhol-owned 1979 Piaget has been reissued with its Seventies credentials firmly intact - the large grooved bezel so redolent of the decade that embraced unapologetically bold design. Although this model has a cleaner face, the black onyx dial remains - a throwback to Piaget's technical prowess in the 1960s, when slimmer movements allowed for the use of such materials. And, like a Warhol artwork, this is not a one-off, produced instead in a limited edition of 28. JD



ANDY WARHOL'S ORIGINAL PIAGET WATCH, NOT FOR SALE



PIAGET VINTAGE INSPIRATION BRACELET WATCH, £24,000, **PIAGET** (WWW.PIAGET.CO.UK)



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### GRAFF

THE MOST FABULOUS JEWELS IN THE WORLD





### GRANDMASTER SPLASH

How better to test a watch's strength than by sending it down the river?

Since its relaunch in the UK last September, Tudor – the 'sibling' (their word) to Rolex – has strived to fill a gap in the adventure timepiece market. It is positioned as the perfect outdoor watch and the go-to brand if you're traversing a ravine, diving under an icepack or trekking through waist-deep snow, so its message is clear. But how to back this up with visible proof of the watches' outdoorsy durability? This is where James Bowthorpe comes in. In 2009, the adventurous Londoner cycled around the globe in 175 days, breaking the world record, and avoiding a kidnap attempt in Iran in the process. The 18,000-mile journey (unsurprisingly) changed him, opening his eyes to a disconnect between man and his environment. By way of re-addressing the balance, Bowthorpe embarked on another project in 2010, collecting rubbish within a one-mile radius of the Thames, building a boat from the assembled detritus and over three days gamely rowing the length of the river. 'The idea of adventure that doesn't cost anything appeals to me,' he says. 'After all, a trip to the North Pole can be about £1 million for a basic team.' Tudor has now partnered with Bowthorpe for his next endeavour: a grander, more ambitious version of the Thames trip. Starting in Manhattan in October, Bowthorpe will build a vessel from the city's waste. 'While the Thames boat was all about wood, I'm expecting New York to provide a lot more lightweight galvanised steel,' he says of the new challenge. This time

he will allow himself a window of 12 days to collect and build, claiming, in his characteristically unflappable tone, that he'll 'assemble it on the street'. The journey will start at the source of the Hudson River, high up at Lake Tear of the Clouds at the northerly end of New York State, before descending down through the Adirondack Mountains, along the white waters of the Hudson River Gorge and into the international shipping lanes of central Manhattan – a total distance of 300 miles. The route is expected to take around three months, finishing in the depths of winter. 'I love the idea of the transition between seasons; as we descend north to south the winter will be closing in. And it looks better,' says Bowthorpe, laughing. A film crew will accompany him but otherwise supplies will be limited to a tent, basic rations, several rolls of gaffer tape and a watch. On his wrist will be a Tudor North Flag, inspired by the watches supplied to the 1952 British North Greenland Expedition, a gruelling two-year glaciological survey of the ice sheet. And while the conditions are unlikely to be as tough, the North Flag's shockproof, waterproof and temperature-resistant in-house movement, Super-Luminova dial (for easy readability in the dark) and ability to be used as a traditional sun compass makes it the perfect expedition

companion. Bowthorpe has only one concern: 'My biggest worry is that I don't do the trip justice. In so many

ways I'm desperate to give it a life; after four years in development I can't wait to get started'. JD

TUDOR NORTH FLAG WITH STEEL STRAP, £2,500, **TUDOR** (WWW.TUDORWATCH.COM)



# AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES DETROIT





The American model turned women's design director of Shinola has referred to her role as 'the coolest thing since peanut butter'.

She also has a soft spot for Detroit, the bike and watch brand's home city.

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COMING TO DETROIT?

'I first visited in 2005 and, since starting to work with Shinola in 2014, have been back several times.'

#### WHERE DO YOU STAY?

'Honor & Folly House, which you can rent through Airbnb. It's in Detroit's oldest neighbourhood and has the perfect mix of modern and traditional furniture, while showcasing the work of local artists.'

### WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE FOR A QUICK LUNCH OR A LONG SUPPER?

'For lunch I love to eat barbecue at Slows. The vibe is laid-back and it's full of locals – great for a smoked-turkey sandwich and beer. The old-world atmosphere at The London Chop House is more conducive to lengthy dinners, starting with a Martini, rolling onto steak with great wine and, finally, rounding it all off at the cigar bar. The Selden Standard is also yummy – a hipster spot with simple decor and modern Detroit cooking. I really want to try the White Horse Inn, a historic landmark that was lovingly restored and feels like a step back in time.'

### MUST VISIT?

'It's hard to choose but I'd suggest the Heidelberg Project, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Eastern Market area. If you can, squeeze in the Henry Ford Museum too.'



### WHERE DO YOU GRAB YOUR MORNING COFFEE?

'I usually start my day with a juice from Drought at Willy's in Midtown and then mosey over to Shinola for a coffee at the bar in the store at 441 W Canfield Street.'

### HOW DOES THE CITY INFLUENCE YOUR DESIGNS?

'Detroit is all about history – it was one of the first cities that was founded on industry and had a major hand in helping build America. Our factory harks back to creating things from scratch, sourcing materials in our own backyard and providing jobs for locals. We couldn't do it without the visceral energy of the city and its residents – it permeates everything we make. When you ride one of our bikes, you feel and see the attention to detail. The same goes for the watches and leather goods. There is an actual person behind each piece, not a mechanical arm, so you get quality and a lifetime guarantee.'

### WHICH WATCH DO YOU WEAR WHEN IN DETROIT?

'My first Shinola was a man's Runwell with a classic leather strap. Now I wear several

styles but this one is sentimental and casual.

I also love my women's Runwell Sport in gold – it's quite classic and versatile.'

#### DO YOU CYCLE AROUND THE CITY?

'Yes. One of the best routes is the Dequindre Cut greenway; it's an urban path with lanes for pedestrians and bikes between the riverfront, Eastern Market and many of the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.'

#### TOP INSIDER TIPS?

'Music is Detroit and Detroit is music.
I recommend the Raven Lounge on Friday
nights for old-school entertainment by
Miss QB. I also go to Dearborn Music and
Encore Records to dig for old vinyl. And
I absolutely love John K King Books
for out-of-print collectables.'

#### **OUT-OF-TOWN ESCAPE?**

'Any of the lakes in Michigan, particularly in summer as a respite from the heat.

My favourite spot is Traverse City.

It's a four-hour drive from Detroit but it's worth the effort: the

National Cherry Festival

in July is the best.'





RUNWELL SPORT CHRONOGRAPH 48MM, £755, **SHINOLA**, AS BEFORE

JOHN K. KING USED & RARE BOOKS MICHIGAN'S LARGEST

# AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES MADAGASCAR



### FLY GUYS

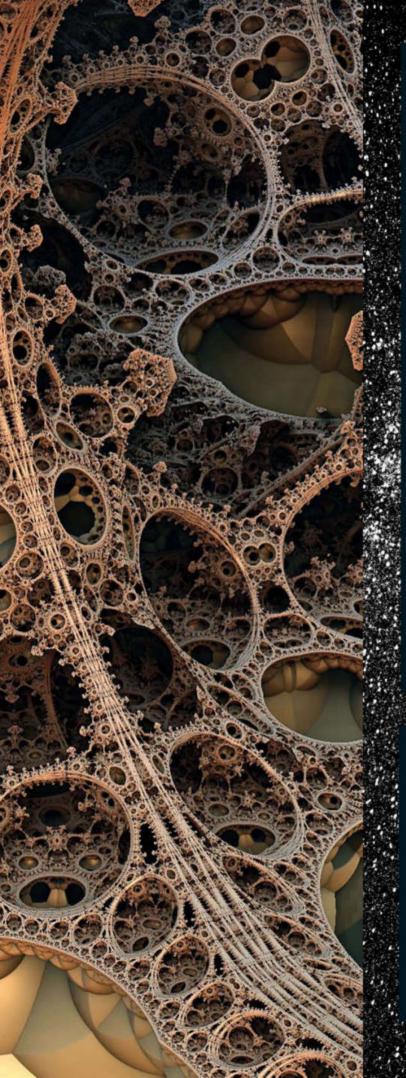
Beetles and butterflies star in this year's brightest pieces

How does a watch company stand out from the crowd? In the competitive jostling of Baselworld watch fair, held every March in a windowless, aircraft-hangar-style conference centre, first impressions are key. It's here that journalists immerse themselves in the coming year's launches, while buyers and retailers cast their eyes over possible future stock. With more than 1,500 exhibitors, it is an exhausting and frenetic few days. New innovations gain maximum brownie points: for mechanical precision and multiple functionality or for exceptional materials. This year two brands settled on the latter, both using the rich biodiversity of Madagascar - more than 90 per cent of the island's wildlife is found nowhere else on earth. The watchmakers have created dials that feature the wing cases of beetles at the end of their life cycle and powder from the wings of a butterfly. First up is Dior, which continues its Grand Bal series for the third year, with the winding rotor on the front of the dial adorned with everything from gold thread to feathers. In the Grand Bal Pièces Uniques Envol the technical embellishment is shifted to the dial, where beetle-wing cases, meticulously sorted from a global assortment of scarabs, including a native to Madagascar, have been cut, polished and inlaid using a marquetry technique. The effect in all 15 models is astonishing, with the untreated, uncoloured, natural material providing a startlingly jewel-like quality. Second is Harry Winston and its Premier Precious Butterfly Automatic collection: four watches, two of which feature the wing powder from the beautiful (and large) Madagascan sunset moth. In this instance it's not about marquetry, but rather a delicate technique where the powder is harvested and used to painterly effect, like the ultimate exotic colour palette. Harry Winston is cagey about exact methods: the fragility of a butterfly's wing is presumably a huge hurdle to overcome, and the house admits it took three years to craft. But the result is, like the Dior, a glittering highlight of 2015. JD

DIOR VIII GRAND BAL PIECE UNIQUE IN WHITE GOLD WITH SAPPHIRES, DIAMONDS AND SCARAB, POA, **DIOR** (WWW.DIOR.COM)







### CAPTAIN'S ORDERS

Harnessing nautical know-how

It feels like sacrilege to say so but the story behind IWC's Portugieser – one of luxury watchmaking's most lionised forms – is rather unconvincing at first. It stemmed from a request by two Portuguese watch importers who wanted, simply, a big watch that would keep good time. The year was 1938 and their instruction was highly unusual in an age when the trend was for graceful, Art Deco pieces. At first, the company management assumed the brief was a mistake, so they replied somewhat patronisingly with an offer of a more modern alternative. But the duo were not put off.

Many of their customers included naval captains and officers

Many of their customers included naval captains and officer who wanted a wristwatch as accurate and reliable as a marine chronometer, which had been guiding seafaring vessels for more than 150 years. So IWC set to work. The only movements the watchmaker had with the chronometric precision prescribed were pocket-watch mechanisms, and after a few trials, it settled on Calibre 74, a proven, if rather large one. So designers put it in a round case measuring a then unwieldy 41.5mm across and 9.5mm deep. Initially, orders were limp and IWC's

'large wristwatch' (as it was first recorded) remained an oddity for decades until the company's 125th anniversary in 1993, which saw a limited-edition run of Portuguese watches for the occasion. The market for Swiss-made mechanical timepieces was resurgent at the time and the new model tapped into the

zeitgeist. Further editions followed, many of them carrying high-end complications, but the watershed moment came with the launch of the reference 3714 chronograph. Like the original, its simple tapered case had a pencil-thin bezel and a wide-open dial, complemented by large Arabic numerals and leaf hands. Since its 1998 launch, it has become IWC's most successful model and the brand has chosen this year to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its signature watch – rechristened as the original Germanic (and more easily trademarked) 'Portugieser' – alongside a series of new pieces.

The name may have changed but the story behind it hasn't – it's still a thoroughly convincing classic.

ROBIN SWITHINBANK



PORTUGIESER IN RED GOLD, £36,900, IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN (WWW IWC.COM)



PORTUGIESER IN PLATINUM, £46,900, **IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN**, AS BEFORE



PORTUGIESER IN RED GOLD, £36,900, IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN, AS BEFORE

### CAPE CRUSADER

Explore the world of a pioneer

Montblanc's improving collection of mechanical watches has been joined this year by the Heritage Chronométrie, a new line that includes four watches inspired by Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, who became the first European to sail to India 500 years ago. Three of the pieces are limited to reflect da Gama's achievements. The 60 white-gold ExoTourbillon Minute Chronographs represent the 60-strong crew of his ship, the São Gabriel. The red-gold Quantième Annuel numbers 238 - the height in metres of South Africa's Cape Point, which da Gama passed en route - and 316 further annual calendars in stainless steel reflect the number of days it took to complete the journey. A fourth watch features the Southern Cross constellation, as observed by da Gama from the Cape of Good Hope. RS



QUANTIEME ANNUEL, £8,700, **MONTBLANC** (WWW.MONTBLANC.COM)



EXOTOURBILLON MINUTE CHRONOGRAPH, £215,000, MONTBLANC, AS BEFORE







# ...AND THE MACHINE

The city's feisty past has put its stamp on a new masterpiece

The reason that Florence – so stuffed full of art and expansive architecture – is such a cultural jewel is not due to some spontaneous outpouring of creativity. Rather unromantically it comes down to money. The Renaissance flourished for so long in this corner of Italy because Florence was the source of the florin (named after the city) and, in an age of corruption, criminality and financial fragility, the florin was

the most reliable and trusted currency in Europe. Banking dynasties such as the Medicis and Rucellais thrived in this epicentre of wealth, able to fund the studios of Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli and other artists while simultaneously changing the city's architectural landscape. It rapidly grew from its Roman and medieval footprint to become a city filled with statement buildings such as the Santa Maria Novella church and the Uffizi Gallery, all paid for by the financial fraternity. Introduced in the 11th century, the Florentine lily (or fleur-de-lys) remains a symbol of the

city to this day. Struck into the florin when it first left the mint in 1252 and

visible as the main symbol of Florence's coat of arms and flag, its heraldic connotations hark back to a period of political squabbling and feudal wars that dominated the region for several centuries. These connections have been celebrated in a new timepiece by Panerai, the Florentine watch brand, which is as loyal to the city as Bulgari is to Rome. Its newly opened store on Palazzo San Giovanni will sell the limited-edition Radiomir Firenze (there are just 99 in existence), its characteristic, cushion-shaped case carved with typical Florentine iconography. Of course, the fleur-de-lys is present, hand-etched into the stainless steel, with each watch taking more than a week to complete. Linear engraving in the metal adds an illusion of depth, throwing the lily into relief; the black-and-white contrast an echo of the marble lineations of the medieval Florence Baptistery, right on Panerai's doorstep. **JD** 

RADIOMIR FIRENZE 3 DAYS ACCIAIO, ABOUT £13,100, **PANERAI** (WWW.PANERAI.COM)

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bustling metropolis to get a colourful hit of inspiration.

#### WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO THE CITY?

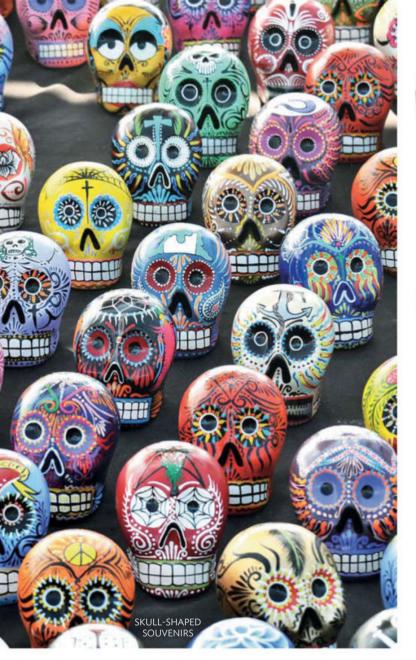
'I lived here from the age of 10 to 13 and it was a very special time. It was my first real cultural experience outside Europe and I loved everything about Mexico: the markets, the colours, the smells and all of the art, crafts and decorations had a big impact on me. Now I live in Alsace, but I go back once a year and I adore it.'

#### HOW DOES IT INFLUENCE YOUR DESIGNS?

'The Day of the Dead has hugely impacted my watches. I think it's really interesting how death is handled in Mexican culture. Their focus on celebration is a very happy and optimistic way of looking at that theme. The colours in my latest timepiece, the Celebration Skull, are a direct lift from the colour palette that I've seen at the festival. The concepts of time and mortality are for me the same idea, and the skull is the best symbol to encapsulate that. It made sense to make the watch in the shape of a skull and the aesthetics of the design developed from there, combining my memories of the Day of the Dead decorations I saw as a child and the beautifully adorned mechanical watch movements found in today's luxury watches.'

#### FAVOURITE RESTAURANT?

'I love Villa Maria in Polanco for its authentic Mexican food, fun atmosphere with a mariachi band, bright interior, lively music and delicious Margaritas.'





BLACK SKULL WATCH, £10,150, **FIONA KRUGER** (WWW.FIONAKRUGER TIMEPIECES.COM)



CEL<mark>EBRATION</mark> SKULL WATCH, £17,230, **FIONA KRUGER**, AS BEFORE



SKULL WATCH, £10,150, **FIONA KRUGER**, AS BEFORE

#### WHERE DO YOU STAY WHEN YOU TRAVEL THERE?

'The Polanco area is great, and I'd definitely recommend the Habita hotel, where rooms are simple, comfortable and well designed. I like to be central so I can walk around. Last time I was there I stayed near the Ciudadela Market and it was really fantastic for exploring and getting ideas.'

#### MUST VISIT?

'It's not a secret, but I adore the San Angel market. I'm sure that some of the art and crafts on sale there can be bought for much cheaper elsewhere, but for brunch at the weekend it's lovely – the setting is gorgeous, the food is great, and there's a lot to see and be inspired by. The Frida Kahlo Museum is also well worth losing a few hours in.'

#### MUST-HAVE SOUVENIR?

'I love everything – that's my biggest problem! Last trip I bought a piece of hand-embroidered fabric, which I have in my house as a wall hanging, as well as a hand-beaded skull, a hand-painted skull, three paintings, a blanket... the list goes on and on. Ceramics, pewter, silver, textiles, artwork – it's a designer's dream. Every time I bring back something different but always something hand-made and each item brings a little bit of Mexican joy and colour to my home.'

#### **OUT-OF-TOWN ESCAPE?**

'When I was younger my favourite holiday was to Cancún – but that was 20 years ago. These days I prefer to head south to Akumal. It's still as beautiful there but far less touristy or spoilt by development. I stay in simple cabanas on the beach and spend my days snorkelling and eating the freshest ceviche. It really is the perfect way to switch off and completely relax.'





# INDUSTRIAL EVOLUTION

As a new breed of British watchmakers whir into action, can they keep up with the world's major players? The comeback starts here...

From the outside, Bremont's long-awaited British manufacturing base doesn't look like much. In fact, with a two-storey, floor-to-ceiling roller door for deliveries and a glass-and-steel entrance, it looks like any other grey industrial unit in Northamptonshire.

Except it's not. Behind the nondescript façade (which doesn't even have a logo), a small group of men and machines are making watch parts including cases, bezels, Faraday cages, seals and plates. Setting up this factory is by far the most significant step to date in Bremont's quest to revive Britain's long-lost watchmaking tradition. Which, if you're even a tiny bit patriotic, is quite something.

Not all that long ago, the story of British watchmaking was one of sad and apparently interminable decline. If you look back to the 18th century, the Brits were the world leaders in clockmaking. But the power shifted first to Switzerland in the 19th century, and then to the USA and the Far East in the latter half of the 20th century, leaving poor old Blighty with little timekeeping influence beyond the historic authority granted to Greenwich and its hemisphere-defining meridian line.

The last decade, though, has been a good one for the British watch scene. Led by brands such as Bremont and Christopher Ward – both born since the turn of the millennium – Britain has become part of the watchmaking conversation again. But can it regain its role as a serious player in the global horological landscape?

Bremont is pushing to make sure it can. Since producing its first watch in 2007, the company has relied heavily on Switzerland. But doggedly, it's been clawing back the many processes involved in taking a watch from designer's doodle to delivery.

The Northamptonshire HQ, which sits on the edge of the vast Silverstone complex and cost around £2 million to get off the ground, opened in late 2014. It's a drop in the ocean compared to the sprawling factory floors of the major Swiss manufacturers, but with its state-of-the-art equipment and eager workforce it bodes well for a new era for the British watch industry.

'We're still learning and we need to become more efficient but we'll soon be making enough parts for 15,000 watches a year,' says Giles English, one of the two brothers behind Bremont. 'At the moment that's more than we need, which means we can grow, but also that we might be able to supply others.'

Bremont's pioneering attitude has breathed new life into the British watch story. In its wake have come a rush of brands, including Pinion, Garrick, Hoptroff, Alexandre Meerson and Meridian. Adding to the groundswell have been a number of companies making quartz watches, including Shore Projects, a brand set up by a young group of beach enthusiasts that's quickly gained a following since its launch in May last year.

'Bremont enabled me,' says Giles Ellis, the product designer who created Schofield watches, the West Sussex-based firm which launched in 2011 at Salon QP (London's annual fine watchmaking fair, itself a product of the rejuvenated British watch scene). 'And I enabled others. Bremont created a cascade effect.'

Few, if any, of these firms create watches under their own steam in the UK, though. Manufacturing a watch 'in-house', particularly its inner workings, is still seen as the ultimate quality signifier by purists but finding the funds and the skills to do so is a big hurdle for the British cohort. Schofield worked with local suppliers to create its Blacklamp Carbon and Beater watches, claiming as much as 95 per cent of the value of the latter



JAGUAR MKI, £8,450, **BREMONT** (WWW.BREMONT.COM)



BLACKLAMP CARBON, £9,900, **SCHOFIELD** (WWW.SCHOFIELD-WATCHCOMPANY.COM)



TORQUAY WATCH, £115, SHORE PROJECTS (WWW. SHOREPROJECTS.COM)



OB14BD60, £80, **OLIVIA BURTON** (WWW. OLIVIABURTON.COM)

originates in England; but according to Ellis this approach isn't cost effective and his next project will see him return to Germany for manufacturing resources.

Others are still adamant they can make watches in the UK. Struthers London, a tiny but promising independent launched in 2013 that currently makes just 10 commissioned watches a year, is working on a calibre of its own, which it'll produce using engineering partners based near the company's Birmingham headquarters. It hopes one day the movement will be available to other brands.

'In Britain, we are trying to do too much ourselves – but a jack of all trades knows none,' says Rebecca Struthers, one half of the husband-and-wife duo behind the brand. 'We need to revive some of the industries we collaborated with previously, and support them in order to support the future of British watchmaking. The skills are still here, it's just bringing them together in the right way.'

It would be easy to get hung up on manufacturing as the only measure of revival. A return to manufacturing parts in this country may be a slow-burn process but British watch-design culture is genuinely resurgent. Plenty would argue that the origin of a watch's design is just as significant for intrinsic value, which casts Schofield et al, small though they are, in a glowing light. These are creative companies imagining brands, watches, associated products and accessories here in the UK.

The same can be said of the new generation of quartz brands. Together with Shore Projects, Uniform Wares, Daniel Wellington, Larsson & Jennings (which is Anglo-Swedish) and the increasingly ubiquitous Olivia Burton, form a growing portfolio of design-led, British-born watch companies now making a material contribution to the overall picture.

Each has tapped into a savvy, vibrant market that values quality British design over the garden-variety tat typically sold by high-street outlets. And it's working. Industry insiders report that Olivia Burton is outselling the mighty Michael Kors – not bad for a brand set up by a couple of London College of Fashion graduates in 2012.

But you get the feeling much more could be done. Away from the easy headlines, the British watchmaking community is far from united. Roger Smith, one of Britain's finest living horologists and purveyor of exquisite traditional (and very pricey) handmade mechanical watches, recently wrote an open letter bashing some of his competitors for claiming Britishness while making watches beyond these shores. Not surprisingly, that didn't make him very popular.

He did have a point, though. British watch brands are still hugely reliant on outside industries and there's a long way to go before the pendulum swings back in their direction. What would help is a strong central governing body (an equivalent to the powerful Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry) to oversee and coordinate the variegated brands, guilds and institutes that make up British watchmaking. Without one, there's limited scope for an all-out assault by the Brits on the global market.

'The British watch industry is very dynamic,' says Justin Koullapis, editor of *The Horological Journal*. 'There's a lot going on that has potential but it needs to learn how to collaborate. It could be much greater than the sum of its parts.' **ROBIN SWITHINBANK** 



# TRY IT ON FOR KING SIZE

Symbols of an ancient ruler appear to rewind the clock

There's no denying that watch companies create products with a certain customer in mind. Last year, the slew of pieces with equine references was testament to the expanding Chinese market, although unsurprisingly that trend seems less compelling since the Year of the Goat eclipsed that of the horse. Blancpain has produced four watches that are a surprising mix of the obvious and decidedly unusual. All four are made using the ancient Japanese technique of carving shakudō (a copper-and-gold alloy) before treating it with rokushō, a chemical solution that produces a dark patina of varying degrees. Two watches depicting a bonsai tree and the Hindu god Ganesh are sure to resonate strongly with Asian customers. Thirdly, and more unexpectedly, a coelacanth (a prehistoric fish thought to be extinct until rediscovered off the coast of South Africa in 1938) is featured, and lastly a Harry Potter-esque griffin. The design team was inspired by the decoration from the palace of King Darius I (522-486BC), whose kingdom included west and central Asia, and Egypt. JD



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## SPACE CADET

From meteorites to moon cycles, it's time to look to the stars

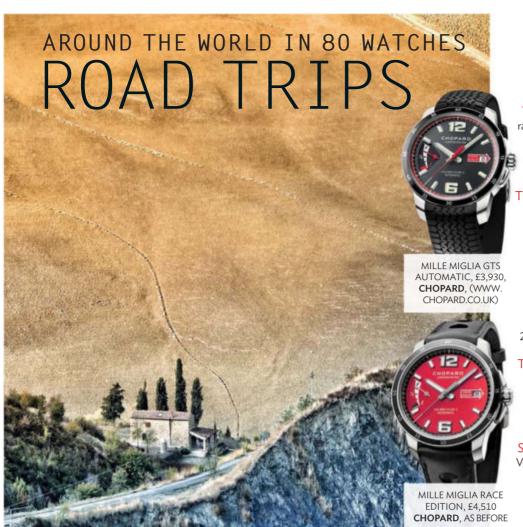
While some watch companies seek to plunder the earth's natural resources for ever-more unusual materials with which to embellish their dials, a canny few are searching even further afield for inspiration. This year has seen a slew of watch complications that look skywards for a point of reference, paying tribute to the planets and constellations as the original measurements of time. Solar time, the moon-phase function and even depictions of the sky at night from the northern or southern hemispheres are now common features. Last year, Van Cleef & Arpel launched the mesmerising Planetarium, a bejewelled miniaturised orrery for the wrist. Jaeger-LeCoultre's tribute is certainly pertinent, with the meteorite dial of its rose-gold or steel Master Calendar a literal slice of the heavens. This is not the first time that meteorite has been used on a watch face: Omega, Corum and Rolex have all dabbled with the material's otherworldly qualities in the past. Adding further intrigue is a meteorite's traceability. This particular piece of rock, with its criss-cross grey patina, comes from the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter that was formed more than four billion years ago, making diamond - usually perceived as very old indeed - look positively juvenile. It fell to earth 800,000 years ago where it travelled on a slow-moving glacier until it was discovered in the Swedish town of Kitkiöjärvi in 1906. JLC now owns a slice of the raw material and the Master Calendar represents its first meteorite-enhanced timepiece. And as a fusion of many disciplines - fine watchmaking, astrology, archaeology and geology - it's hard to think of a better example. JD



(WWW IAFGER-

LECOULTRE.COM)

MASTER
CALENDAR IN
PINK GOLD,
£18,200, JAEGERLECOULTRE,
AS BEFORE



Route: The Mille Miglia from Brescia to Rome

THE LOWDOWN: Dubbed 'the most beautiful race in the world' by Enzo Ferrari, this course stretches 1,600km through the countryside from Brescia to Rome, and back again. The race record is still held by Stirling Moss who drove it in 10 hours seven minutes and 48 seconds in 1955. CAR TO DRIVE: A 1956 Porsche 550A Spyder RS - although you'll have to borrow it from

the Porsche Museum, as Chopard's co-president Karl-Friedrich Scheufele did this year.

THE WATCH: Anything from the Mille Miglia collection. It has become a flagship line for Chopard since it was launched in 1988 to mark the Swiss brand's role as official timekeeper. This year sport a Mille Miglia GTS: it's the first time the watch has had an in-house movement. Or better still, a Mille Miglia 2015 Race Edition, gifted to all drivers. A thousand models are also available for non-competitors. THE LOOK: (For her) navy Dolce & Gabbana Capri

pants, cream Brunello Cucinelli sports jacket, Dries Van Noten high-collar silk shirt and tan Tod's leather driving shoes. (For him) Loro Piana jacket, pale-blue-check Berluti cotton shirt, crisp white chinos and Lanvin suede sneakers.

STOP OFF: Book a rooftop table at TeodoricoRe in Verona for seasonal Italian cooking and great cocktails. WHAT TO SAY: 'One more espresso and I could drive all night.'

WHAT NOT TO SAY: 'I've just spotted the police up ahead, you'd better take your foot off the gas.'

### Route: The Princesses Rally from Paris to St Tropez

THE LOWDOWN: A women-only 1,600km race through France in a very leisurely five days. Depending on the vintage, each car is given its own target to complete every day. This is more about personal achievement than beating the vehicle ahead of you, with plenty of stops at smart hotels along the way and a Champagne reception each evening.

THE CAR TO DRIVE: Dust off that little number you have in the garage, as long as it dates from pre-war or up to 1980. Alternatively, fire up a classic replica such as a Morgan or a PGO Cévennes. A soft top isn't obligatory but you'd be crazy not to work on your tan as you make your way down to the Riviera.

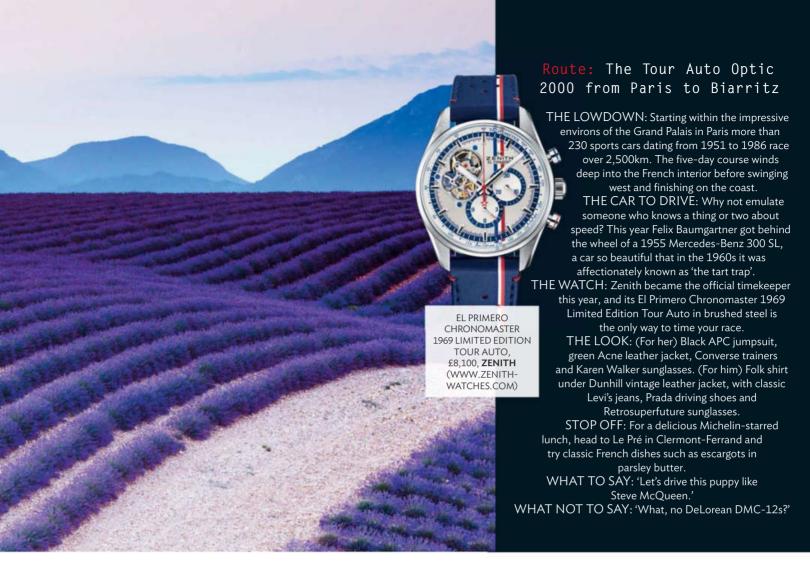
THE WATCH: With Richard Mille a first-time sponsor, a sporty ceramic model is appropriate, like the RM 037, which has plenty of shock-absorbing technology to

overcome any bumps in the road. THE LOOK: Monochrome Isabel Marant poncho over khaki J Brand jeans with white Maison Margiela trainers and Cutler and Gross sunglasses. STOP OFF: For a pre-race sojourn stay at the elegant Grand Pigalle in Paris, opened by the team behind the

LADIES RM 037 BLACK CERAMIC, £83,000, RICHARD MILLE, (WWW. RICHARD MILLE.COM)

Experimental Cocktail Club. WHAT TO SAY: 'Step on it and we'll get to the Byblos in time for sundowners.' WHAT NOT TO SAY: 'Bloody women drivers.'





### Route: The Carrera Panamericana from Tuxtla Gutiérrez to Durango City, Mexico

THE LOWDOWN: Known as the most gruelling road race in the world due to a spate of fatalities between 1950 and 1954, La Carrera Panamericana runs 3,200km from the state of Chiapas in the south-east of Mexico to Durango in the north-west.

THE CAR TO DRIVE: A Porsche Carrera, of course, named after the German model's successes in the race in the 1950s.

THE WATCH: A Tag Heuer Carrera. Jack Heuer first designed this now iconic model back in 1963. Inspired by this event, he wanted to produce a watch that could cope with the toughest road conditions, hence the wide-open, easy-to-read dial and shock-resistant,

waterproof case.

THE LOOK: A brown Rick Owens leather jacket, vintage US Army overshirt, Frame Denim jeans, Belstaff Trialmaster boots and Thierry Lasry sunglasses.

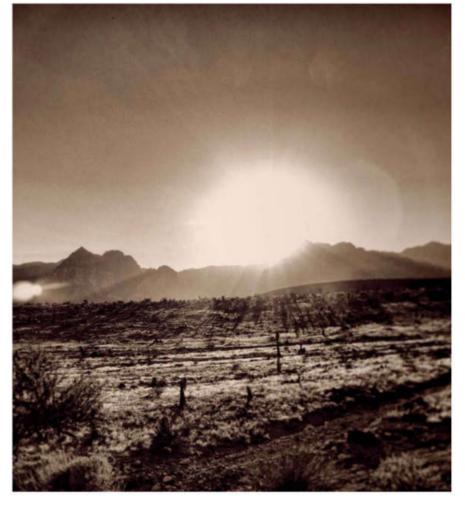
STOP OFF: In time for 2016's race, the Rosewood Puebla is scheduled to open next year in one of the most historic neighbourhoods in the city, which was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.

WHAT TO SAY: 'I love that Pink Floyd song "Pan Am Shuffle".'

WHAT NOT TO SAY: 'Let's hope

we don't crash like David Gilmour.' JD

CARRERA CALIBRE 6, £2,600, **TAG HEUER** (WWW.TAGHEUER. CO.UK)



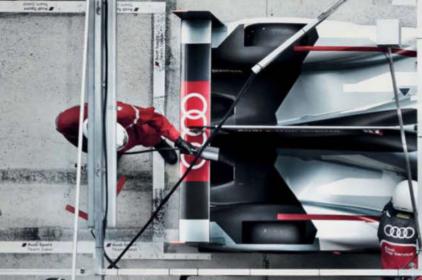




FROM LEFT: OCEANOGRAPHIC EXO 4000 KING POWER WITH TITANIUM AND CARBON CASE, BLACK DIAL AND RUBBER STRAP, £18,900. MP-08 ANTIKYTHERA SUNMOON WITH TITANIUM CASE AND RUBBER AND ALLIGATOR STRAP, £199,000, BOTH HUBLOT (WWW.HUBLOT.COM)

the MP-08. Impressive as the original Greek device was – by Zeus, it even had an indicator that tracked the sequence of the Panhellenic Games! – Buttet was not to be outdone by the ancients. Thus the MP-08 includes a tourbillon and tells the actual time of day. Nor did the brand's involvement with the Antikythera shipwreck end there – it not only cooperated on a third dive to retrieve further treasures from the wreck late last year but also created a diving watch, the Exo 4000, for the occasion. Right back at you, Archimedes. SK

# AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WATCHES







CARRERA CALIBRE 16. AUTOMATIC CHRONOGRAPH SENNA SPECIAL EDITION. £3,150, TAG HEUER (WWW.TAGHEUER.CO.UK)



FORMULA ONE SENNA SPECIAL EDITION WITH OPALINE DIAL, £1,350. TAG HEUER, AS BEFORE

## PERPETUAL MOTION

Twenty one years after his death, one of Formula One's greatest champions joins a new team

Ayrton Senna, who may have been the greatest racing driver of all time, died in 1994 when he crashed his Formula One McLaren on the Imola circuit in Italy. So there was considerable surprise when he was spotted at a party in Barcelona earlier this year, a sighting confirmed by numerous eyewitnesses. Apparently he wore racing kit and looked marvellous; as pouty, boyish and brooding as ever, with that untameable kiss-curl still apostrophising his forehead. He delivered a short speech to the stunned guests, not to bring news from the other side but rather to reflect on the balance of aggression and calculation required to win championships. All of which is slightly less weird than it sounds. Senna's appearance in Barcelona was in hologram form, cleverly conjured from archive footage by the team at TAG Heuer, the watch firm for which Senna was an ambassador for several years before his death. The party was held to mark the release of the brand's new Senna Collection of four special-edition timepieces. For most Brazilians, however, Senna never really died anyway. He was always a spiritually serious fellow who attributed his most audacious victories to a force greater than his own. Even in his youth he appeared, somehow, destined for immortality. Today his grave is visited by more people than those of JFK, Marilyn Monroe and Elvis combined. 'Nothing,' his headstone reads, 'can separate me from the love of God.' In some respects Senna was an unlikely Brazilian hero. He was born in São Paulo into a rich family. His trajectory from go-kart wunderkind to Formula One champion was seamless and he won at Monaco - perhaps the toughest of all tracks - a record six times. Yet in other ways Senna was the perfect role model: he loved his family, kept his nose clean, enjoyed the adoration of the masses and raised huge amounts of money to help

poor children. The British had Nigel Mansell, moustachioed and cheeky. The French had Alain Prost, wizened and rational. Brazil had Ayrton Senna, beautiful, intense, possibly slightly mad, forever spot-lit in his own sunbeam of genius and godliness. STEVE KING



CARRERA CALIBRE 16,

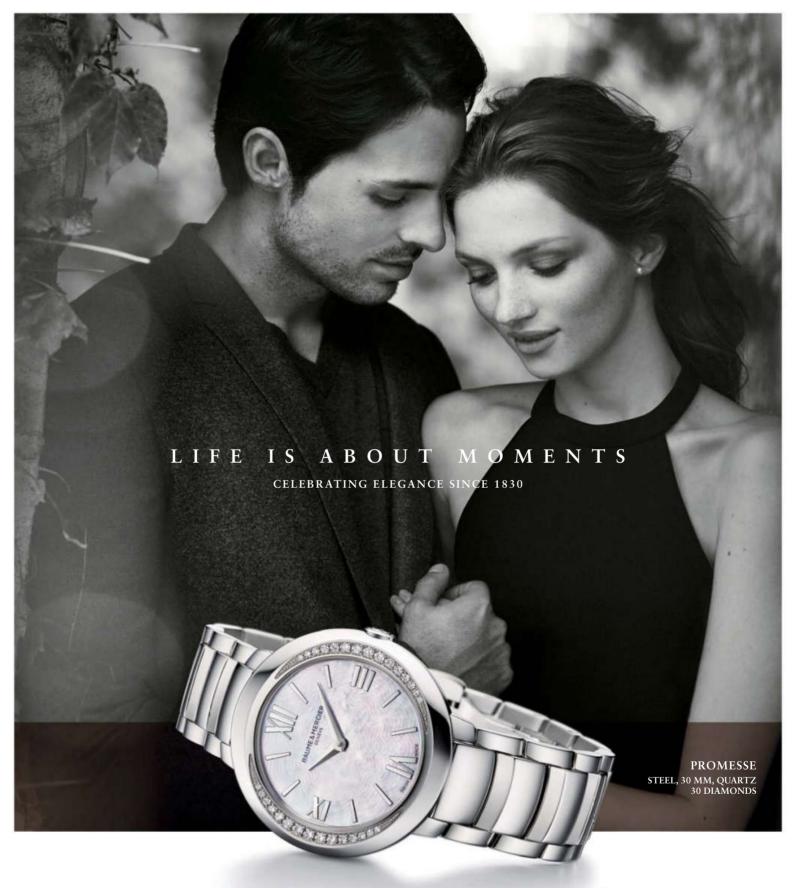
AUTOMATIC

CHRONOGRAPH SENNA

SPECIAL EDITION,

FORMULA ONE SENNA SPECIAL EDITION WITH ANTHRACITE DIAL, £1,350, TAG HEUER, AS BEFORE

PHOTOGRAPH: AGNIESZKA DOROSZEWICZ/SEVERIN WENDELER





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